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The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community



Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as)



AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY

United States of America

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organization, international in its scope, with branches in 213 countries in Africa, North America, South America, Asia, Australia, and Europe. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was established in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) (1835-1908) in Qadian, a small and remote village in the Punjab province of India. He claimed to be the expected reformer of the latter days, the Awaited One of the world community of religions (The Mahdi and Messiah).

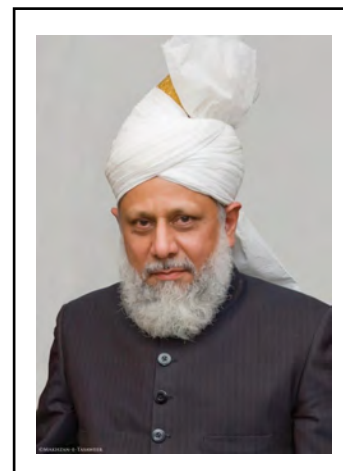
The Movement he started is an embodiment of the benevolent message of Islam – peace, universal brotherhood, and submission to the Will of God – in its pristine purity.

Hazrat Ahmad (as) proclaimed Islam as the religion of man: “The religion of the people of the right path” (The Holy Qur'an: 98:6). The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was created under divine guidance with the objective to rejuvenate Islamic moral and spiritual values. It encourages interfaith dialogue, diligently defends Islam and tries to correct misunderstandings about Islam in the West. It advocates peace, tolerance, love and understanding among followers of different faiths. It firmly believes in and acts upon Qura'nic teaching:

“There is no compulsion in religion” (The Holy Qur'an: 2:257).

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community strongly rejects violence and terrorism in any form and for any reason.

The Community has been headed by his elected successors. The present Head of the Community, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, was elected in 2003. His official title is Khalifatul Masih V or Fifth Successor of the Promised Messiah (as).



Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad,
Khalifatul Masih V (aba)

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Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq (ra) was the first Ahmadiyya Muslim missionary to arrive in America. In 1921, he founded the Muslim Sunrise, which stands today as the longest running Muslim publication in America. The magazine seeks to open discussions on Islam and topics relating to religion in general. It highlights the role of Islam in an ever-changing global society. It provides a platform for public opinion on contemporary issues and presents their solutions from an Islamic perspective.

The Muslim Sunrise welcomes letters to the Editor, Questions and Submissions.

Email us at MuslimSunrise@Ahmadiyya.us
or go online to www.MuslimSunrise.com



Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

- sa: Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)
as: 'Alaihis-Salam (may peace be upon him)
ra: Radhi-Allahu 'Anhu/'Anha (may Allah be pleased with him/her)
rh: Rahimahullahu Ta'ala (may Allah shower His mercy on him)
aba: Ayyadahullahu Ta'ala Bi-Nasrihil-'Aziz (may Allah support him with His mighty help)

Verse numbers in the references from the Holy Qur'an count Tasmiya at the beginning of a chapter as the first verse.

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Muslims follow the name of God's prophets with the prayer alaihis salaam or 'may peace be upon him,' and for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, sallallahu alaihi wasallam or 'may peace and blessings of God be upon him.' Companions of prophets and righteous personalities who have passed away are saluted by radhi-Allaho anhu/a or 'may Allah be pleased with him/her.' While such salutations sometimes are not set out in the text for readability, we encourage readers to offer these prayers as if set out in full.

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FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ
وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَ
تُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ②

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

Say, 'O Allah, Lord of sovereignty, Thou givest sovereignty to whomsoever Thou pleasest; and Thou takest away sovereignty from whomsoever Thou pleasest. Thou exaltest whomsoever Thou pleasest and Thou abasest whomsoever Thou pleasest. In Thy hand is all good. Thou surely hast power to do all things.

The Holy Qur'an (3:27)



HADITH

SAYINGS OF THE

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (sa)

It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Dharr who said: I said to the Holy Prophet (May peace and blessings be upon him): "Messenger of Allah, will you not appoint me to a public office?" He stroked my shoulder with his hand and said: "Abu Dharr, thou art weak, and authority is a trust, and on the Day of Judgement it is a cause of humiliation and repentance, except for one who fulfils its obligations, and (properly) discharges the duties attendant thereon."

Sahih Muslim, Book: 20, Number: 4491

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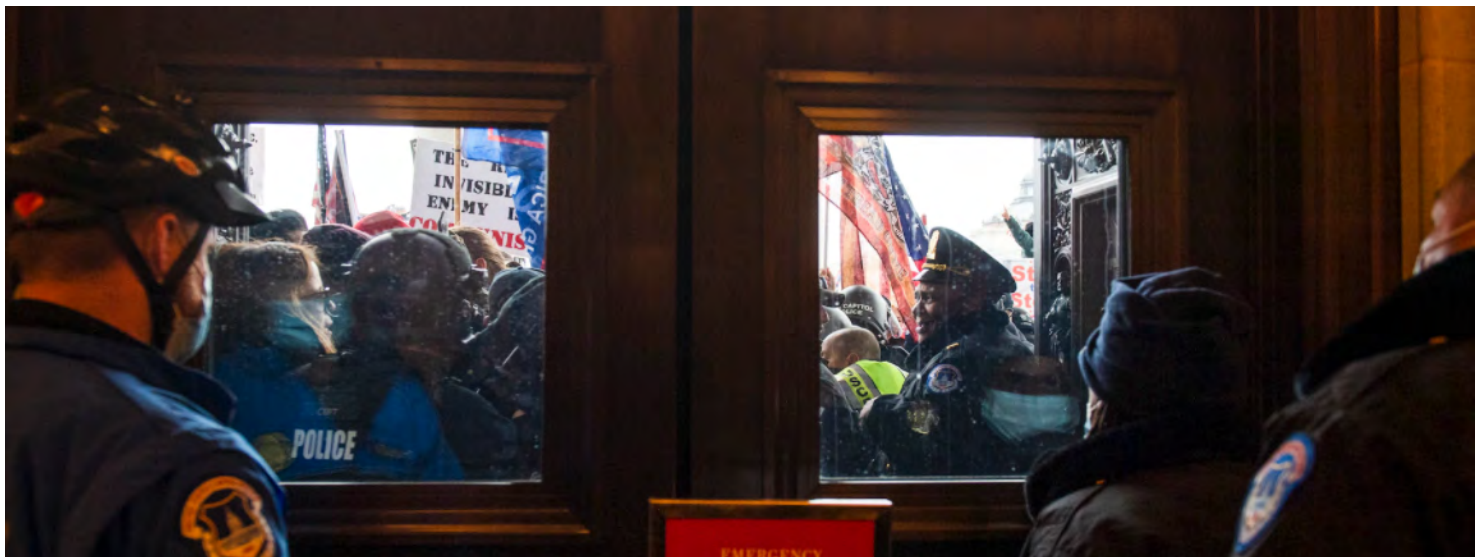
On January 6, 2021, the world watched in disbelief as an extremely disturbing and distressful event unfolded in the United States of America (USA). An event linked to the imminent transfer of power following recently held Presidential elections came to pass at the heart of American democracy. A mob provoked to mistrust and anger by the defeated President's rhetoric, stormed the United States Capitol Building, disturbing the legal process of transition of power, and vandalizing the offices. Cameras showed scuffles breaking out within the building, and outside between the law enforcement officials and the mob. Such a violent and offensive onslaught had never been witnessed in the history of the USA. As the Washington Times posted, it was an "Assault on Democracy."

This unsettling incident compelled us to carefully study the subject of transfer of power, be it political, religious, or relating to economic institutions. World history provides many examples of transition of

power. In this issue of the Muslim Sunrise, we have tried to cover not only the processes of Islamic, Jewish, and Christian leadership changeover, but also samples of political transition of some heads of states, either peacefully or by force.

It goes without saying that this is an extremely important and vast subject; we invite our readers to study the articles and give us their feedback.

Mubasher Ahmad
Editor-in-Chief



Trump supporters try to force their way into the Capitol.
(Amanda Voisard/for The Washington Post)

IN THE WORDS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH(as)

Forms of Arrogance and Means of Purification

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, The Promised Messiah (as)
(The Essence of Islam, Vol II, Pp. 357-359)

It is easy for a person to discard the principal vices, but some vices are so subtle and hidden that one is not normally conscious of them, and even when one becomes conscious of them it is difficult to discard them. They are moral vices which cause disruption in social life. Slight differences generate rancor, hatred, jealousy, hypocrisy and arrogance and a brother begins to look down upon a brother. If a person observes Salat properly for a few days and people praise him, he falls a victim to showing off, pride and self-esteem and loses that sincerity which is the true purpose of worship. If Allah, the Glorious, bestows wealth, knowledge, high family status or honor on a person he begins to look down upon a brother who does not enjoy those advantages. If through obstinacy or enmity a person's relations with a brother are embittered, he devotes himself day and night to finding fault with his brother or carries tales against him to someone in authority so that by winning the favour of the latter he might replace his brother in some office held by him, while he himself suffers from all those faults. Such are the subtle vices which are difficult to discard. Arrogance is one of them and is manifested in diverse forms. The divines suffer from it in respect of their knowledge. They are occupied all the time in finding fault with each other at the intellectual level so as to humiliate each other and to bring each other into contempt. It is very difficult to get rid of such subtle vices, but they are not tolerable under Divine law. It is not only the common people who are afflicted with them but also those who shun well known vices and are esteemed as divines and scholars and people of high degree. Deliverance from these subtle vices is like undergoing a sort of death. Until a person is delivered from the darkness of such vices, he cannot achieve complete purity of soul and cannot become worthy of those bounties and excellence that are bestowed by God Almighty on purification of the soul. Some people deem themselves as having been delivered from such



Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian,
The Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi (as)

moral vices, but when they are confronted with another person they are greatly roused and are not able to suppress their high notion of self-esteem and their arrogance and exhibit such a low quality of morals of which they themselves had no conception. It is at such times that it is known that they have found no deliverance from such vices and have not yet achieved any good, and that they are still far short of that purification of the soul, which is a characteristic of the righteous and is a sign of true excellence. This shows that moral purification is very difficult and cannot be achieved without the grace of Allah, the Glorious. Such grace is also attained through the three means that have just been mentioned, namely, first, striving and planning; secondly, Prayer and supplication; and thirdly, keeping company with the righteous.



The Rightly Guided Caliphs: Hazrat Ali (ra)

[Summary of Friday Sermon delivered by
Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul
Masih V (aba) on Dec 18, 2020]

After reciting Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz and Surah al-Fatihah, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) said that he would continue highlighting incidents from the life of Hazrat Ali (ra).

His Holiness (aba) related that during the final illness of the Holy Prophet (sa), he would go to the mosque with the help of two companions, one of whom was Hazrat Ali (ra).

His Holiness (aba) said that after the demise of the Holy Prophet (sa), Hazrat Ali (ra) was among the companions who bathed the blessed body of the Holy Prophet (sa), and was also among the same companions who lowered him into the grave.

Pledging Allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra)

Then His Holiness (aba) presented some narrations regarding Hazrat Ali's (ra) acceptance of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) as the first successor after the Holy Prophet (sa). His Holiness (aba) presented a narration, that after the Muslims had pledged allegiance to him, Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) looked around and did not see Hazrat Ali (ra). He inquired about Hazrat Ali (ra) and sent for him, upon which he arrived and pledged allegiance at the hand of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra).

His Holiness (aba) presented another narration which states that Hazrat Ali (ra) pledged allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) either the first, or second day after the

demise of the Holy Prophet (sa), and always remained loyal to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra).

His Holiness (aba) presented a quotation in which the Promised Messiah (as) stated that Hazrat Ali (ra) was so eager to pledge allegiance at the hand of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra), that he left his home without even having fully tied his turban.

His Holiness (aba) presented some narrations which state that Hazrat Ali (ra) also reaffirmed his pledge of allegiance six months later after the demise of Hazrat Fatimah (ra).

His Holiness (aba) presented another quotation of the Promised Messiah (as), in which he addressed those who believe that Hazrat Ali (ra) was of the opinion that he should have been the first successor as opposed to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra). However, the Promised Messiah (as) wrote that this could not have been the case, because not only did Hazrat Ali (ra) pledge allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra), but he remained completely steadfast and loyal alongside Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra). He never joined those who tried to stir up disorder against Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra), rather he opposed them. The Promised Messiah (as) also stated that Hazrat Ali (ra) had many alliances throughout Arabia; had he truly been of this opinion and believed that he should have been the first successor, then he surely could have migrated, and gathered his allies and started a war. But he never did such a thing,

rather he remained entirely loyal. He always offered his prayers behind Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) and never abandoned doing so, nor did he ever utter anything close to a complaint of any sort.

Thus, His Holiness (aba) said that Hazrat Ali (ra) never opposed any of the three Caliphs before him; and to say that he did not pledge allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) would be a disservice to his honor.

Various Services of Hazrat Ali (ra) After Demise of the Holy Prophet (sa)

His Holiness (aba) then made mention of the various services rendered by Hazrat Ali (ra) during the eras of the first three Caliphs before him.

His Holiness (aba) said that after the demise of the Holy Prophet (sa), there were some who went astray and some who joined a false claimant to prophethood named Musailimah. This posed a threat to the safety of Madinah, as plots were being made to attack Madinah. Thus, Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) devised a plan to station the army at various entry points to Madinah, and Hazrat Ali (ra) was among those appointed to oversee this effort.

His Holiness (aba) said that during the Caliphate of Hazrat Umar (ra), at times when he himself would go out on expeditions, he would appoint Hazrat Ali (ra) as the leader of Madinah in his stead.

His Holiness (aba) said that during the Caliphate of Hazrat Uthman (ra), there were various disorders which arose. During this time, Hazrat Ali (ra) dutifully remained alongside Hazrat Uthman (ra) and would provide sincere and wise counsel in various matters. Once, Hazrat Uthman's (ra) home was besieged by some dissidents, who would not even let Hazrat Uthman (ra) eat as they stopped any food from reaching him. This greatly troubled Hazrat Ali (ra) who went to plead with them, saying that even the disbelievers would let their prisoners eat. Hazrat Ali (ra) made every effort to plead with them.

His Holiness (aba) said that when he learned of plots for the martyrdom of Hazrat Uthman (ra), he sent his two sons Hasan and Husain to stand guard at the door of Hazrat Uthman (ra). Eventually, when the dissidents broke through and martyred Hazrat Uthman (ra), Hazrat Ali (ra) was extremely troubled and grieved.

His Holiness (aba) said that once, Hazrat Ali (ra) said to Hazrat Uthman (ra), that he feared plots were being made to assassinate him. Thus, he requested permission from Hazrat Uthman to fight against these people, however, Hazrat Uthman (ra) replied saying that not a drop of blood should be spilled for his sake.

Commencement of Caliphate of Hazrat Ali (ra)

His Holiness (aba) said that after Hazrat Uthman (ra) was martyred, Muslims flocked towards Hazrat Ali (ra), saying that Hazrat Ali (ra) was the next Caliph. Hazrat Ali (ra) responded by saying that the next Caliph would be he who the companions who participated in the Battle of Badr would choose as the next Caliph. Everyone insisted that the next Caliph should be Hazrat Ali (ra). Hazrat Ali (ra) inquired about Hazrat Sa'd (ra) and Hazrat Zubair (ra), upon which Hazrat Sa'd (ra) stepped forward and became the first to pledge allegiance at the hand of Hazrat Ali (ra). Afterwards, Hazrat Ali (ra) went to the mosque, where everyone pledged allegiance to him.

His Holiness (aba) presented some quotations of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud (ra) in which he stated that for Hazrat Ali (ra) to take up the mantle of the Caliphate at that time was a great sacrifice due to the difficult circumstances which had arisen, however it was crucial that he did so, in order to keep the institution of the Caliphate firmly established.

His Holiness (aba) said that he would continue highlighting incidents from the life of Hazrat Ali (ra) in the future.

A Request for Prayer for Ahmadis in Algeria and Pakistan

His Holiness (aba) again urged the Community to pray for the Ahmadis in Algeria as well as the Ahmadis in Pakistan. The conditions for Ahmadis continue to worsen for Ahmadis in Algeria; false cases are constantly being levelled against them. Similarly in Pakistan, Ahmadis are being made to face increasingly difficult circumstances. His Holiness (aba) prayed that those who are causing such trouble for Ahmadis should be held accountable by God Almighty, and that the hardships being faced by Ahmadis may be alleviated. His Holiness (aba) also urged the Ahmadis of Pakistan, that they must turn their attention towards prayer more than ever before. His Holiness (aba) prayed for ease and the ability to openly preach the true message of Islam, not only in Pakistan but throughout the world.

Transfer of power of Khulafa-e-Rashideen

Seher Bhatti

Many had been looking forward to the new year 2021 after experiencing a difficult 2020, but none were quite expecting this year to start off with an attack on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, goaded by a President who would not accept the fact he had lost a fair election. A peaceful transfer of power seemed out of the question days before the inauguration of the newly elected President scheduled to take office a week later. This led many to re-highlight the process of peaceful transfer of power as it had always been practiced in democratic governments. One certainly would not expect this kind of hassle when electing a US President in an age where everyone is educated and supposedly well informed. So how were things done when electing a Khalifa at the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa)?

Journey back to 632 A.D., the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) had just passed away in the arms of his beloved wife, Hazrat Aisha (ra). The companions came together at their usual gathering place, which was a type of shack or shed, which is known in Arabic as a "saqeefah". The saqeefah was in a garden belonging to the most famous of the Khazraj tribes, to which Sa'd ibn Ubadah (1) belonged. Eventually the conversation turned to the topic of 'what next, what was going to happen now', even though it was not the companions' intention to gather to specifically discuss the next leadership of the Ummah. Nevertheless, they were a community who needed someone in charge, and so this conversation ensued. The name continuously mentioned was that of the most senior figure they all looked up to: Sa'd ibn Ubadah. He was the senior-most leader of the Khazraj tribe, and a prominent companion of the Prophet Muhammad (sa).

Word reached Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) that these discussions were taking place and so he and Hazrat Umar (ra) went to the saqeefah together. Upon arrival they exchanged pleasantries and heard the thoughts of the Khazraj, based on the fact that they were greater in number as a tribe and so leadership from amongst

them made sense. Bear in mind this was all done in a civil manner. Afterwards, Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) addressed them, beginning with praising them out of respect for who they were. He then pointed directly at Sa'd ibn Ubadah and said: "Oh Sa'd, I know you were sitting right in front of the Holy Prophet (sa) when he said, 'It is the Quraish who shall lead this matter of ours. The righteous amongst them shall lead the righteous of mankind and the impious shall lead the impious of mankind' (2).

Meaning the Holy Prophet (sa) is saying that the leaders shall be from the Quraish, after which he brought logic and shared: "And you know that Arabs will not follow anybody other than the Quraish" (2).

Meaning that their ignorance is still there and so they will not accept anyone other than the Quraish. To this Sa'd ibn Ubadah said: "You have spoken the truth. You are the leaders and we are the helpers" (2).

Then Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) picked up the hands of Sa'd ibn Ubadah and Hazrat Umar (ra), and announced that he has nominated these two, therefore (the people should) choose from whichever of these you like. A person from the Khazraj suggested they have two leaders, one from each side so that everyone is happy. Voices were raised and everyone began talking at once, and Hazrat Umar's (ra) voice, being the loudest of them all said: "Oh Abu Bakr, stretch out your hand," to which he complied, and Hazrat Umar (ra) announced, "We shall give the Khilafat to you." And so Hazrat Umar (ra) was the first person to accept him as Khalifa, and they soon announced it to the entire Ummah (2).

The Prophet Muhammad (sa) had not openly appointed Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra), but he did indirectly prepare him in people's minds to be his Successor. During his final days Prophet Muhammad (sa) instructed to lock the doors of all entrances to the mosque, but to leave Abu Bakr's door open, so that he is able to come and

lead the Salat. Through gestures like these he was hoping to convey to his Ummah to look to Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) after him.

When Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra) sensed his time of death was near he called a group of the Sahaba (companions of the Holy Prophet (sa)) and informed them of this; he thought it best to choose his Successor for them. And so he asked them, "Who shall I choose?" "We trust your judgement, O Khalifa of the Messenger," was their reply.

For the next few days, he began to invite his Sahaba into his chamber and specifically asked each one of them about Hazrat Umar (ra). They praised his choice and gave good opinions about him. When Hazrat Usman (ra) came to see him, the Khalifa told him that were it not for Umar (ra), Usman (ra) would be the person he would choose, which is exactly what happened after Hazrat Umar (ra) passed away. By unanimous consensus it was agreed that Hazrat Umar (ra) would be the best choice to succeed Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra).

At the time of Hazrat Umar's demise (ra), as he lay dying due to an assassin's attack, he formed a committee of six people to decide who the next Khalifa will be. The delegation included:

- Ali bin Abi Talib (ra)
- Abdur Rahman bin Awf (ra)
- Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas (ra)
- Zubayr bin al-Awwam (ra)
- Uthman bin Affan (ra)
- Talhah (ra)

They were instructed to declare the next Khalifa within three days amongst themselves. In addition to this, Hazrat Umar (ra) appointed fifty people to oversee these men around the house where this process was to take place. Abdur Rahman bin Awf (ra) showed no interest in being Khalifa and withdrew his name from being considered, although ultimately, his was the deciding vote when it came to a tie between Hazrat Usman (ra) and Hazrat Ali (ra). "The casting vote is now with Abdur Rahman bin Awf who asked both Usman and Ali one question in isolation whether they would follow the Qur'an, Sunnah of Muhammad and footsteps of the previous caliphs. Ali said that he

would follow the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Muhammad and his own wisdom, judgement and belief. Usman replied to the question in the positive without any reservation. Thereupon, Abdur Rahman gave his verdict in favor of Usman" (3).

Hazrat Ali's (ra) election came about after the brutal murder of Hazrat Usman (ra). On the day of the assassination of Hazrat Usman (ra), on the same afternoon, a group of Sahaba approached Hazrat Ali (ra) and expressed their concern for the need of a leader, therefore they agreed that Hazrat Ali (ra) should be the next successor. But Hazrat Ali (ra) turned it down saying that he only saw himself as a helper, and not as someone to take charge. Of course, they insisted on their decision and so eventually Hazrat Ali (ra) agreed to take on Khilafat, on the condition that they conduct this in public, in the mosque of the Prophet of Islam. So, it was announced and the Bai'at was done at the hands of Hazrat Ali (ra) without any objections (4).



We see that with each Khalifa, even though they were chosen or elected in various ways, a sense of discipline and humility was uppermost on each occasion. Some preferred they not be considered for the blessed responsibility of Khilafat and would opt out of any consideration, but still pledged their unwavering service to whomever was chosen. They had so much trust in Allah, in who they were, in their beliefs, that they were ready to follow without question whomever the mantle was passed to. Therefore, the transfer of power demonstrated here was beyond their time and viewed as more sacred. These people behaved civilly with one another, practicing what they preached, showing support for everyone.

Nowadays even with the transfer of power we are still divided and cannot act as one body because there is too much hate and animosity. People have ulterior motives and they let this cloud their thinking. Looking back at the Sahaba, we are amazed by their dedication and steadfastness and are encouraged to act accordingly, not only in our dealings but in our thinking as well. May we all strive to be the best we can be in the sight of Allah, Amin.

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1. Sa'd ibn Ubadah, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sa%CA%BDd_ibn_%CA%BDUbadah
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Selection of Khalifa in the International Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

Amtul Kafi Yadullah Bhunnoo

Caliphate or Khilafat is a Divine institution established to maintain the community's unity and spiritual progress after a Prophet's demise. A Caliph or Khalifa is a vicegerent of a Prophet. In the Holy Qur'an, Khilafat is mentioned in the following verse:

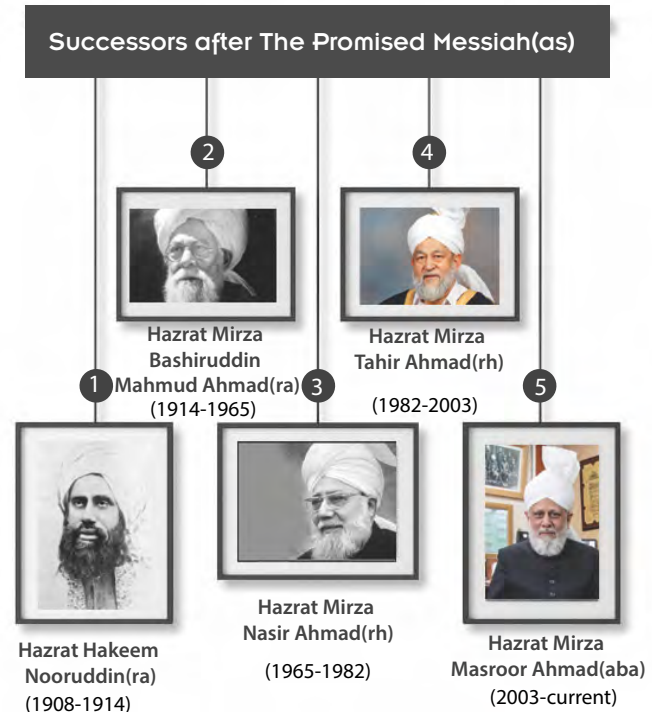
"Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will, surely, make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them" (1).

Since Khilafat is a Divine institution, a Khalifa is only appointed through the guidance of Allah. A Khalifa is not chosen based on a person's heritage, wealth, or any worldly status. A Khalifa is never appointed via propaganda campaigns.

Khilafat was established after the demise of the Holy Prophet (sa), with the first Khalifa being Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra), a companion of the Prophet (sa). After the demise of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra), Hazrat Umar Farooq (ra) succeeded as the second Khalifa of the Holy Prophet (sa), then Hazrat Usman Ghani (ra), and then finally Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (ra). There was always one Khalifa at a time, and only after the death of a Khalifa would the next one be chosen or elected. These Khulafa (plural of Khalifa) were known as Khulafā'-ur-Rāshidūn (the Rightly Guided Khulafa). After Hazrat Ali's demise (ra), Muslims struggled to elect a Khalifa who would represent the entire Ummah (Muslim Nation) (2).

When the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) passed away, Khilafat was established once again in the Muslim Ummah. This is known as the Khilafat of Ahmadiyyat or Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya. The Khalifa of the Promised Messiah (as) is known as Khalifatul-Masih, or Khalifa of the Messiah. The first Khalifa of the Promised Messiah (as) was Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Nooruddin (ra), at whose demise Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad (ra) became the Khalifa. The third Khalifa was Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad (rh), and the fourth Khalifa was Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh). The fifth and the present Khalifa of the Ahmadiyya

Muslim Community is Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba).



Human beings are involved in selecting the Khalifa but only after receiving Allah's guidance, as they did after the Holy Prophet's (sa) demise and after the passing of the Promised Messiah (as). However, recognizing a need to have a committee to help select a Khalifa, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II, Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad (ra), established an Electoral College. Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II (ra) established these electoral guidelines after he witnessed that after the first Khalifa's demise, some members of the Ahmadiyya Movement did not want to establish the Khilafat and wanted power for themselves. When they saw that their demands were not being met, they decided to establish their own group in Lahore, which had a leader whose authority resembled that of the Khalifa. This move was an attempt to show their opposition to the person being appointed as the legitimate Khalifa and a reaction to their authority not being recognized.

The Khalifatul-Masih (successor to the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as)) is elected to the office by the voting

members of the Electoral College, which was established for this purpose by Hazrat Musleh Maud, Khalifatul Masih II (ra). During the life of a Khalifa, the Electoral College works under the supervision of the Khalifa and remains dormant. However, after the demise of a Khalifa, the Electoral College becomes completely independent and elects the next Khalifa. During the election of the Khalifa, names are proposed and seconded by the members of the Electoral College, who then vote for the proposed names by show of hands, no secret ballot is allowed (3, 4).

There could be 150 or more people responsible for electing the Khalifa through Divine guidance (5). As stated, once a new Khalifa is elected, this college becomes dormant and only becomes active again after the demise of a Khalifa, the members serving their purpose only in electing a Khalifa through prayers and seeking the help of Allah. It should be noted that this college consists of dedicated members of the community from a mix of worldly backgrounds, yet they hold one thing in common: their unending dedication to serving in the way of Allah. Their sincere effort in praying zealously with patience can take many hours or even days before an answer is received to guide them to the Khalifa of Allah's choice. These people do not have any political affiliations, nor can they allow their worldly associations and personal interest come into play; reciting Istighfar, or seeking forgiveness from Allah, is also an integral part of the process to limit satanic influence.

A Khalifa does not receive a salary, nor political favours, nor does he get involved in any political system. Religion and state are separated, and no changes are made in the faith to suit politics, nor is any special event created to serve the Khalifa. The Khalifa unites all the people of all nationalities, ethnicity, and creed together under singular guidance that follows the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. The Khalifa does not live in a palace nor out of touch with his followers; he is available to meet with anyone regardless of who they are. Each Khalifa may have his own unique way of explaining religious, spiritual and secular matters. Nevertheless, the essence of the teaching and guidance he imparts always come from the Holy Qur'an and the sayings of the Holy Prophet (sa), as well as from the writings of the Promised Messiah (as).

The Khalifa is not selected based on lineage: Khilafat is not inherited. Some may disagree and say that it is inherited as there are many Muslim Imams who say that the Khalifa must be of the Holy Prophet's (sa) lineage. This notion likely arises from the case of the "Rightly Guided Khulafa," as they were all related to the Holy Prophet (sa) in one way or another. This is also the case with the majority of the Khulafa of the Promised Messiah (as) thus far, with the exception of Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih I (ra). This selection is not due to the lineage but to the righteousness of that individual. The people closest to the Prophet are the ones most likely to follow the path of their teacher in every aspect. Khilafat is based on Divine guidance vouchsafed to a committee that continues to pray until Allah guides their hearts towards the person whom Allah has chosen to continue propagating His message to His people. Khilafat is a blessing; it may be that Allah desires to continue bringing people from the Prophet's lineage to occupy the role, in the same way that Allah blessed Prophet Abraham (as) with many Prophets from his descendants.

There is no job description for this position. Every Khalifa is relevant to the times and carries out duties according to Allah's plan and will. Some people may feel that Khalifatul-Masih has the capacity to punish them unfairly by casting them out of the community. However, the Khalifa loves every member of the community as he prays for them continually and answers their letters in reply to any questions or requests for special prayers. People are not banished due to someone's fancy; it is a system where the membership to the community is terminated if anyone shows poor conduct; this is very painful for the Khalifa to bear. It needs to be remembered that this membership can be regained if any change for good is seen in the person concerned.

Some may say Khilafat is an unnecessary obligation in which people are enslaved, and their thoughts and habits are controlled; however, if we look at the world and a political system, or even the non-political systems, where hierarchies are involved, there is always a need for a leader who can guide people as well as carry out their duties with justice and diligence. This is the role of a Khalifa. Khulafa fulfil their obligation to guide people towards the right path and to execute

their responsibilities to their Creator, Lord and Master, Almighty Allah. A Khalifa does not gain anything personally. A Khalifa brings a spiritual change in the people he guides and brings about a revolution in the community, a revived energy for the betterment of themselves and for society. This is not seen in any other community under any other so-called religious and political leadership. The Khalifa emphasizes prayers, spiritual reformation, education, and financial sacrifice to help the less fortunate by bringing every less privileged person in the community towards betterment. This is the true leader; this alone is the true Khilafat.

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Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) - First Speech after being elected the fifth Caliph

The Transition of Political Power in Jewish History per the Old Testament

Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal



Like any other old civilization, Jewish history has gone through the process of evolution. Here we provide quotes directly from various resources available on the internet. We encourage readers to refer to the links given below to read the original text as given at <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>:

Quoted text from various sections of the referenced websites:

"Jewish history began about 4,000 years ago (c. 17th century B.C.E.) with the patriarchs-Abraham, his son Isaac and grandson Jacob. Documents unearthed in Mesopotamia, dating back to 2000-1500 B.C.E., uncover aspects of their nomadic way of life as described in the Bible. The Book of Genesis relates how Abraham was summoned from Ur of the Chaldeans to Canaan to bring about the formation of a people with belief in the One God. When a famine spread through Canaan, Jacob, his twelve sons and their families settled in Egypt as 12 tribes. As per references given in the old testament these tribes are: Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim and Manasseh (1). In Egypt "the Israelites were fertile and prolific; they multiplied and increased very greatly," and there they became the "Israelite people." Following the death of Joseph - one of Jacob's sons who had become viceroy of Egypt Pharaoh oppressed the Israelites by placing upon them burdensome labor. God "remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob," and sent Moses to rescue the Israelites from Egypt. By this time the nation numbered "600,000

men on foot" which is usually understood to be military-aged men excluding women and children. At Mount Sinai, the Israelite nation is given its laws and regulations - the Torah - and affirms their covenant with God. After wandering for 40 years in the desert under the leadership of Moses, the twelve tribes enter the land of Canaan with Joshua in command.

After conquering the land, each tribe was allotted an individual territory to settle. During this period of settlement, and the subsequent period of the Judges, there was no predetermined pattern of leadership among the tribes though various crises forced the tribes into cooperative action against enemies. Shiloh served as a sacral center for all the tribes, housing the Ark of the Covenant under the priestly family of Eli. Under the impact of military pressures, the Israelites felt compelled to turn to Samuel with the request that he establish a monarchy, and Saul was crowned to rule over all the tribes of Israel. Upon his death, Saul's son was accepted by all the tribes as the new king, save Judah and Simeon who preferred David. David's struggle with the house of Saul ended in victory for him and all the elders turned to David for royal leadership. He ruled from Hebron and later Jerusalem over all the tribes of Israel and following his death was succeeded by his son, Solomon. After the death of Solomon, the tribes once again split along territorial and political lines, with Judah and Benjamin in the south loyal to the Davidic house and the rest of the tribes in the north ruled by a succession of dynasties. The confederation of the twelve tribes was primarily religious, based upon belief in the one "God of Israel" with whom the tribes had made a covenant and whom they worshiped at a common sacral center as the "people of the Lord." The Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Covenant were the most sacred objects of the tribal union and biblical tradition shows that many places served as religious centers in various periods.

During the desert wanderings, leadership of the people was vested in the princes of each of the tribes

and the elders who assisted Moses. Joshua summoned "the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel" to make a covenant in Shechem. During the early centuries the Hebrews were ruled loosely by "judges," who seemed to exercise a limited amount of judicial, legislative, and even military control over the otherwise independent Hebrew tribes (2).

Saul

As recounted in the I Samuel and II Samuel, the Hebrews approached Samuel, the "judge" of Israel, and demanded a king. The account makes clear that both Samuel and Yahweh considered the desire for a king to be an act of disobedience towards Yahweh; the Hebrew people, according to Samuel, would greatly suffer for this disobedience. However, Yahweh selected a king for the Hebrews and Samuel formally anointed Saul as the new king. There are no accounts of him exercising monarchical power outside of military exploits. Saul, however, repeatedly fails to carry out Yahweh's instructions as spoken by Samuel, Yahweh immediately chooses another king, David. It's clear that the monarchy is viewed as a negative development in Hebrew history. In the history of the settlement of Canaan, the book of Judges, when Gideon is offered the monarchy, he replies, "You have no king but Yahweh."

David

The most difficult king to assess in the Hebrew monarchy is the second one, David. He is a young and beautiful adolescent who becomes wildly popular in the court of Saul. Deeply suspicious, Saul at several times tries to kill the young David, but the youth flees into the hills. When Saul kills himself, David returns and becomes king. While the Hebrew judgment of David seems to be ambivalent, his accomplishments in his forty year reign are undeniable. Finally the Philistines are defeated under the brilliant military Hebrew empire. Most importantly, David unites the tribes of Israel under an absolute monarchy. This monarchical government involved more than just military campaigns, but also included non-military affairs: building, legislation, judiciaries, etc. He also built up Jerusalem to look more like the capitals of other kings: rich, large, and opulently decorated. Centralized government, a standing army, and a wealthy

capital do not come free; the Hebrews found themselves for the first time since the Egyptian period groaning under heavy taxes and the beginnings of forced labor.

Solomon

King Solomon turned the Hebrew monarchy into something comparable to the opulent monarchies of the Middle East and Egypt. The Hebrew account portrays a wise and shrewd king, the best of all the kings of Israel. The portrait, however, isn't completely positive and some troubling aspects emerge. He built a fabulously wealthy capital in Jerusalem with a magnificent palace and an enormous temple attached to that palace (this would become the temple of Jerusalem). He took 700 wives and over 300 concubines, most of whom were non-Hebrew (in the book of Judges, Yahweh forbids all male Hebrews to marry non-Hebrews). All of this building and wealth involved imported products: gold, copper, and cedar, which were unavailable in Israel. So Solomon taxed his people heavily, and what he couldn't pay for in taxes, he paid for in land and people. He gave twenty towns to foreign powers, and he paid Phoenicia in slave labor: every three months, 30,000 Hebrews had to perform slave labor for the King of Tyre. This, it would seem, is what Samuel meant when he said the people would pay dearly for having a king. While the author of II Samuel, the biblical account of Solomon's reign, portrays Solomon as a good king it's clear from the account that the Hebrews living under him did not think so.

When Solomon died, between 926 and 922 BCE, the ten northern tribes refused to submit to his son, Rehoboam, and revolted. From this point on, there would be two kingdoms of Hebrews: in the north - Israel, and in the south - Judah. The Israelites formed their capital in the city of Samaria, and the Judaeans kept their capital in Jerusalem. These kingdoms remained separate states for over two hundred years. The history of the both kingdoms is a litany of ineffective, disobedient, and corrupt kings. The Hebrew empire eventually collapses, Moab successfully revolts against Judah, and Ammon successfully secedes from Israel. Within a century of Solomon's death, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were left as tiny little states - no bigger than Connecticut - on the

larger map of the Middle East (3).

The Conquest of Israel

In 722 BC, the Assyrians conquered Israel. In order to assure that conquered territories would remain pacified, the Assyrians would force many of the native inhabitants to relocate to other parts of their empire. Israelites disappear from history permanently; they are called "the ten lost tribes of Israel."

The Conquest of Judah

When the Babylonians later conquered Judah, they, too, relocate a massive amount of the population. The Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Judah in 597 BC and exiled the king, Jeconiah who was succeeded by Zedekiah. Later the Temple in Jerusalem built by Solomon was destroyed by the Babylonians. King Zedekiah served as a tributary ruler to Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar deported around 10,000 Jews to his capital in Babylon; all the deportees were drawn from professionals, the wealthy, and craftsmen. Ordinary people were allowed to stay in Judah. However, they moved that population to a single location so that the Jews can set up a separate community and still retain their religion and identity. This deportation was the beginning of the Exile.

However, Zedekiah later defected from the Babylonians. Nebuchadnezzar responded with another expedition in 588 and conquered Jerusalem in 586. Nebuchadnezzar caught Zedekiah and forced him to watch the murder of his sons; then he blinded him and deported him to Babylon. Again, Nebuchadnezzar deported the prominent citizens, but the number was far smaller than in 597: somewhere between 832 and 1577 people were deported (4).

Second Temple Era and Its Aftermath

In the year 3390 (371 BCE) a group of Jews returned to resettle in Judea. One of their leaders was Zerubabel, a scion of the royal house of David, and construction began on a Second Temple. But the Second Temple did not match the glory of its predecessor. The Jews at this time were often ruled by foreign kings. The Hasmonean family, defeated the Greeks called as the miracle of Chanukah in 3622 (139 BCE). Afterwards, they assumed the throne of Judea, despite their being of Aaronic, priestly stock. In 3725 (36 BCE),

Herod, an Edomite, killed the Hasmonean King Antigonus and took the throne for himself. He murdered anyone suspected of disloyalty - including many Torah sages. In a moment of remorse, Herod enlarged the Temple Mount and renovated the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, creating a magnificent edifice. (The remaining portion of the wall Herod constructed to support the enlarged mountain still stands and is now called Western Wall.

Descendants of David during this period became spiritual leaders of their people. It was the leadership and vision of these men and the other sages that carried the Jewish nation through the era of foreign rulers. Temple of Jerusalem was once again destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE.

Babylon and Beyond

Even in Babylon, the descendants of David continued to lead their people in the capacity of Resh Galuta (exilarch). That position too came to an end in the 11th century due to Muslim persecution.

Even today, many Jewish families can trace their lineage to David and Solomon. It is a cardinal belief that a descendant of David, the Moshiah (messiah), will once again lead us to a restored Jewish kingdom in Israel, rebuild the Holy Temple and usher in an era of world peace and Godly awareness. And it will last forever" (5).

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The Process of Electing the Pope

Andleeb Shams Ahmed

One of the oldest elections, which dates back centuries, is the election of a Pope. The Pope is the spiritual leader of the Roman Catholic Church, which is the largest sect of Christianity with over one billion followers. Although it cannot be confirmed, many Roman Catholics believe Saint Peter to be the first Pope. He was one of the disciples of Jesus (as) and was recognized as the leader of the twelve disciples. It is said that when Saint Peter was asked to be a disciple, it was at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, and he was to carry on the prophet's message and faith after him.

After Saint Peter passed away, it is not clear what process was used to choose the next Pope. The election process used today began in 1271 after Pope George X was selected after three years with no Pope in place, the longest election in the Catholic Church's history. This was due to political rivalries, despite the fact that campaigning for a Pope is strictly forbidden. Pope Gregory X began what is known today as the Conclave (1).

As stated before, the Pope is the spiritual leader of the Roman Catholic Church and holds the office and jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome, who presides over the central government of the Church. The original word for "pope" was Papacy (2). The Pope must follow the Papal Supremacy. Papal Supremacy is the doctrine of the Catholic Church that the Pope must follow because of his office as Vicar of Christ, which is the "earthly representative of Christ" (3). He is the visible source and foundation of the unity of both the bishops and the whole company of the worshippers and the faithful (4). As the pastor of the entire Catholic Church, he has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered (5). In simpler words, "the Pope enjoys, by Divine institution, supreme, full, immediate, and universal power in the care of souls" (6). A Conclave elects the Pope, that is, an assembly of cardinals who meet in Rome for a secret and private meeting and eventually vote for the new Pope (7).



Pope Francis steps out to the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica to greet the people of Rome on the night of his election, March 13, 2013 (CNS)

Once the current Pope passes away, the cardinals gather in Rome and meet in seclusion. Technically, any Roman Catholic male can be elected Pope, but since 1379, every Pope has been selected by the group of cardinals who will cast their votes in the Conclave. They go into the Sistine Chapel, the one with famous ceiling artistry by Michaelangelo, which is inside the Pope's official residence. Once all the cardinals are inside, they have to swear an oath of secrecy, cannot leave the Conclave until a new Pope is elected, and cannot vote for themselves. The process is designed to prevent any of the voting members sharing details, either during or after the conclave. The threat of ex-communication would hang over the heads of the cardinals if any were tempted to break their code of silence and secrecy (8).

To become Pope, one must receive at least two-thirds of the votes. The cardinals who collect the ballots and count the votes are selected randomly, and new ones

are assigned each morning and afternoon. Each cardinal writes the name of his choice on a folded card that he presents at the altar and puts in a lidded urn. The ballots must match the number of cardinals present, or they are burned without being tallied. The first counter writes each name on the ballots on a separate piece of paper, hands the ballot to the next counter, who looks at it and gives it to a third observer who reads the name aloud. The ballots are strung together and put in another urn. The ballots are then burned. Not only is this done to keep the secrecy of the votes, but it also alerts people who are gathered outside when a new Pope has been chosen or not. While burning the ballots, chemicals are added to make the smoke white, if a Pope is selected, or black if no one gets the two-thirds vote. This colored smoke is released from the chimney for the outside gatherers to see if a Pope has been elected or not. The process continues with two votes in the morning and two in the afternoon until a new Pope is chosen. If, after the third day, no one is selected, the voting is suspended for at least a day for prayer. When at least two-thirds of the cardinals finally vote on a new Pope, the ballots are burned, and white smoke will appear outside, letting the world know that a new Pope has been chosen (9). However, right before the white smoke is released, the newly elected person is asked if he wants to be Pope and what he would like his name to be. The Pope typically wears an elbow-length cape known as a mozzetta, a ceremonial white peaked hat called a miter (or a zucchetto skullcap on less formal occasions), red shoes symbolizing the blood of martyrs, and a variation of a fisherman's ring, which shows the Pope is a successor of Saint Peter who fished for a living. The name is then announced to those gathered in St. Peter's Square. Traditionally, the new Pope will appear on the balcony overlooking St. Peter's Square and be officially introduced as the new Pope and with his chosen name. Most Popes will then say a few words, mostly a prayer (10).

There are a few interesting notions regarding the conclave. Only cardinals under the age of 80 may vote. However, many still show up and participate in pre-conclave meetings devoted to preparatory matters and discussions about the future of the Church. The Conclave does not have to be in Rome, but it has almost always been there for some reason. The Pope



Cardinals conducting their final mass before entering the papal conclave.
Franco Origlia/Getty Images

does not have to be a cardinal. The only requirements of becoming a Pope are being male and being baptized in the Catholic Church. This, however, would make millions of men eligible and the last time this happened was in 1378. Until 2013, the papal conclave never elected anyone from outside of Europe for Pope. Italians held the position for centuries, from 1523 to 1978, when Pope John Paul II, a Polish man, was elected. In 2013, an Argentinian man, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, was elected to the Papacy, becoming the first Pope from outside of Europe since Pope Gregory III, who reigned in the 8th century. He chose the name Pope Francis (11).

Most Popes, like most religious leaders, including Caliphs, remain in their position for life. However, there have been a few instances of popes resigning, which changes the process a bit. The conclave and full process of electing a new one remain the same, with a few differences. The most recent Pope who resigned was Pope Benedict XVI, who chose to resign at the age of 85 in the year 2013. It was after his resignation that Pope Francis from Argentina was elected. He is the first pontiff to have stepped down since Gregory XII in 1415. Canon Law states: "If it happens that the Roman Pontiff resigns his office, it is required for validity that the resignation is made freely and properly manifested but not that it is accepted by anyone." Pope Benedict's resignation set in motion the centuries-old process of electing a new Pope (12).

The process of electing a Pope has generally worked well, even though it was set up several centuries ago. Under Michelangelo's soaring work in the Sistine Chapel, a group of mere mortal men considers the best possible person to be the Vicar of Christ. This may be a religious feat, yet it is still sometimes a political process. People wonder: "Why does the Church choose Popes this way? "How influential are certain cardinals, particularly Italian ones?" "Is this truly the best system for the Church?" Some of these answers are best summed up by Frederic J. Baumgartner, professor of History and Theology and author of several books regarding the election process and the conclave: "My official position about why they do it this way is it give a sense of mystery to outsiders, which is never a bad thing. Being too transparent ends up being a problem. And this way covers up the poli-

tics that do take place. For the most part, they've elected decent men as popes in the last several hundred years. The system has continued to work reasonably well. But speaking as a historian, I would dearly love to get the information about what happened in the Conclave, at least a couple of years after it was over. From that point of view, the system works too well" (13).

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An overview of the phases of Transition of Power in the United Kingdom

Rabia Salim, Islamabad, UK

In the United Kingdom, the emphasis is on success during a transition of power, namely, the peaceful and generally accepted handover of power from one party to another following a general election (1).

The three major groups involved in this transition are the Government, the Opposition party who, ostensibly, could go on to take office, and the Civil Service. It is the Civil Service's task to work with the Government, yet as it gets close to the election, the Civil Service is communicating with the Opposition party also. There are six well defined phases that ensure the process flows smoothly, and, interestingly, the new Prime Minister and his party members usually take office in 10 Downing Street (official office and residence of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom) within 16 hours of the general election results (2). The speed is quite amazing! Certainly, the goal is to ensure that the new people taking office do so calmly and skillfully. This enables the old Government to phase out peacefully.

Certain preparations are key for the successful transition of power: It is important for communication between the Government and the Civil Service to remain flawless, and the Opposition party's work prior to election day to get into Government is of great import (3).

There are six phases in the transition process (4). Firstly, is the preparation of the Opposition. Depending on how long they have been out of office, or if they have spent too much time on the 'back bench,' there may be a need to tackle a challenging mindset.

Secondly is the preparation of the Civil Service. Initially, they will need to be briefed on policy and then they will have contact with the leading spokesman of the Opposition party. The intensity of the preparation depends on closeness to the transition. Of course, their focus is on serving the current Government.

Thirdly, the Civil Service has a lot to do with policies,

however, the timing of the briefing varies. Nevertheless, the Opposition starts work on their policies long before they come into contact with the Civil Service. Official contact happens around the time formal preparations begin for the Government.

Fourth, politicians gear up to try to win the election. There is little time for anything else at this point, and the Civil Service really comes into play now to iron out details for possible changes in Government.

Fifth is the election result and handover, which is expeditious in comparison to, for example, the system used in the United States. There is little time spent on the actual handover.

The sixth phase is when the new administration takes up office and is in its first phase of Government.

The transitions become more difficult when there is a change in Government. It impacts the new inexperienced ministers and the Civil Service who may not have ever experienced a change. If the parties involved carry out diligent pre-election preparation, the transition will be more successful. Also, relationship building and close contact between all who are involved is key and helps the process - mainly between the senior Civil servants and the permanent secretaries with the Opposition frontbench, as their contact is limited (5).

The time it takes for the polls to close and the new Prime Minister to enter 10 Downing Street is around 24 hours. This swift operation also includes a trip to Buckingham Palace. And implementation of the new leader's plans from briefings prepared earlier starts right away. The leader's staff line up so that when the Prime Minister arrives, they clap him/her as he/she enters, and intense induction begins. The same night of his/her arrival, the Prime Minister announces most of his/her new Cabinet. Some officials argue that a slightly slower and measured handover would be

wise, whereas the reason for the speed is to prevent any ideas forming that the Government is in any type of crisis! Two weeks after this date, the Queen delivers a speech to the nation (6).

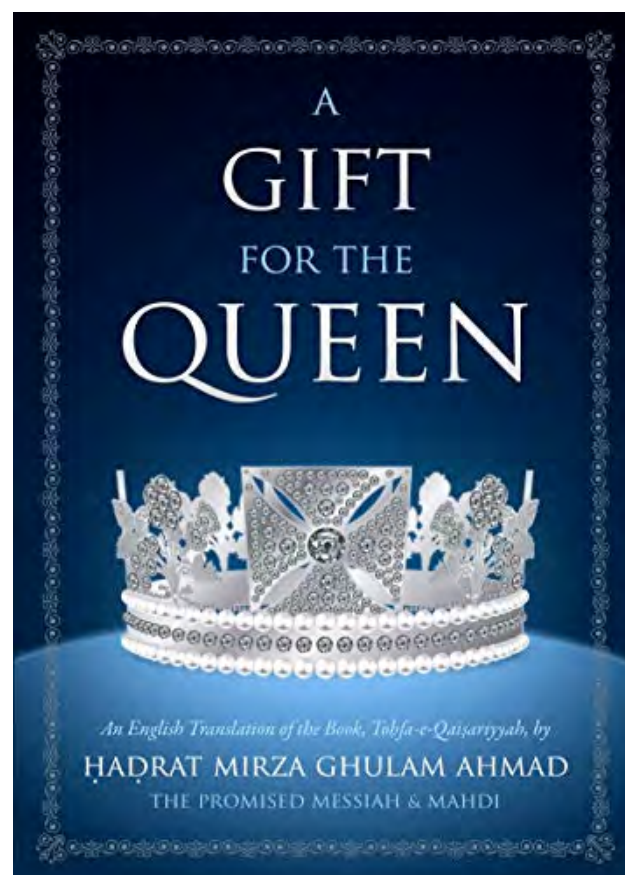
This is an overview of the phases of transition of power in the United Kingdom which gives us some insight into the similarities and differences between the British and American systems. Of course, each transition every four years has peculiarities associated with the unique political nuances involved. These are only the main principles that have been outlined for the reader.

At this point I would like to take the reader to the connections between the British and the Punjab Province in India where the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, (as) lived. At the time of the Promised Messiah (as), the Punjab was under British rule. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) spoke of the favors afforded to the people of Punjab under British rule in many of his writings. For example, he opens his book 'Noah's Ark - an Invitation to Faith - Strengthening of Faith' with a 'thank you' to the British Government (7). At the time of writing, the Plague of 1897 was rampant and at this stage the inoculation program was being initiated. The Government was responsible for the organization and the expenditure of inoculations, hence the reason for thanking them. The Promised Messiah (as) was not afflicted by the plague and this was a prophecy fulfilled, a prophecy that had been revealed to the Promised Messiah (as) by God, to prove his truth as an agent of God. For this reason, the Promised Messiah (as) himself was not planning to take any medical steps as protection from the plague, as this would give opponents of his claim the opportunity to attempt to refute his truth. However, as long as he did not take any such steps, but other Ahmadi Muslims did, the validity of the prophecy would still hold true. This is the primary reason behind the Promised Messiah's (as) gratitude towards the Government, and he states the benefits of the inoculation to the reader. He goes on to explain the benefits of seeking treatment in times of illness. Another important point that the Promised Messiah (as) is making is the importance of allegiance to the Government of the place where one resides and the need to obey its rules and regulations in everything good. He is giving value to the British Government in the vein of being thankful for their

generosity and benignity. To explain the grandeur of this prophecy, the Promised Messiah (as) expounds that even though there is a vaccination, the outcome will be more favorable still to his Community than to the public at large, due to his Community's acceptance of the Messiah and their true faith in God (7).

Although the outcome of the current pandemic has not been prophesied by any major religion, nor has God instructed that it will show truth in our religion, it is interesting to note the parallels, namely, that faith can draw one closer to God in times of trials such as these.

Another book in which the Promised Messiah (as) shows gratitude to British rule is 'A Gift for the Queen'. It is a presentation of the message of Islam Ahmadiyyat, written for Queen Victoria on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee. He expresses his thanks once again for her benevolence and kindness because under her sovereignty, the subjects of British India are afforded many rights and comforts (7). He writes to lay out the message of peace and brotherhood in Islam, just as the members of the land enjoy peace under the sovereign's rule. He writes for the hope and a prayer that



'felicitations' be upon her, not only the worldly ones that she and millions enjoy, but heavenly ones too. The purpose of the writing described is that her popularity enjoyed in this life also be extended to the heavens through recognition of the Promised Messiah's (as) grand Divine message. Accepting the unity of God would extend the success of this worldly Government into the immeasurable realm of the Hereafter (8).

A highlight of Islamic teaching is that the system promoted in Islam for rulers is a representative system. This also involves election, and consultation in national affairs. The Head of an Islamic State is instructed in the Qur'an to take mutual counsel from representatives of the people: "And those who hearken to their Lord and observe Prayer and whose affairs are decided by mutual consultation" (8), therefore, when it comes to living in a democratic system, Muslims are loyal and supportive to the government and elected officials.

Also, in the context of this verse, the Holy Prophet (sa) was to go on to discharge the responsibility of a great State. This is not to say that with power there is not a responsibility to uphold morals and the rights of people. In fact, a great responsibility rests on the shoulders of leaders. The success of a peaceful and just transition is a success in a Muslim's book of conduct also.

As long as leaders uphold the value of justice and equality, societal peace will, God willing, ensue.

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The American Presidential Election 2020: Peaceful Transitions, a Thing of the Past?

J. Selden Harris Jr.



Trump supporters try to break through a police barrier, Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, at the Capitol in Washington. (AP Photo/Julio Cortez) THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"Americans are more deeply divided and angry with each other today than at any time since the 1850s. Now, as then, distrust of leaders and institutions is widespread, and charges of conspiracy by one group against the liberty, livelihood, or principles of another pour out in torrents of speeches and news stories. Now, as then, there are racial and ethnic clashes in the cities, terrorist confrontations, a fracturing of parties, and charges of corruption everywhere in government, in churches, in businesses" (1).

The above statement could have been expressed at any time in American history. It could also have been stated at any time during any American Presidential election. It could have been stated in the 1860 election when Abraham Lincoln was elected President. It could have equally been uttered in the contentious Presidential election between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson or in 2016, or most recently, in 2020. But it was not.

These words were written in 1999 by Dr. Robert Fogel, an American economist, who, interestingly, is

infatuated with writing books that deal with American religion.

In his "The Fourth Great Awakening," Fogel argues that in the wake of "American religious awakenings," American society "evolves positively" but only after a time of difficulty. Fogel points out that the "first three awakenings" occurred before the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the Civil Rights Movement, respectively. The first three "awakenings" were led by American Christian groups.

The "Fourth Great Awakening" is different altogether. It started in 2000 and it "seemingly" is led by various supporters of diverse American religions. It could be decades before we know exactly what the effect of the Fourth Great Awakening will accomplish.

In many ways, the American Founders anticipated such events. Highly suspicious of organized religions, the American Founders were concerned that "religion" could get in the way of anything from national progress to Presidential elections. For this

reason, the Founders desired “peaceful transitions of power” (2). It was not faith systems that bothered them. What bothered them, were the clergy.

The American Founders had good reason to mistrust the clergy. The fear was that Christian clergy were ambitious people who were prone to usurp power. The 17th Century gave them every reason to feel this way. The 17th Century in Europe saw one religious war followed by yet another religious war (3).

If leaders were left unchecked, usurpation of political power could easily happen. However, there is another reason why the American Founders desired a “peaceful” transition of power. The 17th century saw the tumultuous era known as the “English Civil Wars.” During the era, a Monarch was beheaded, Parliament usurped powers, and a major Church Council was held in London which would have repercussions in the North American Colonies. Colonial Virginia saw an insurrection in 1676, known as “Bacon’s Rebellion.” Nathaniel Bacon, the son of a British nobleman, lead a “rebellion” supported by enslaved West Africans and indentured servants (4). Their goal was to “violently” remove Lord Berkeley, the Royal Governor in Jamestown.

And although 1676 was 100 years earlier than 1776, the seeds of the American Revolution were already planted.

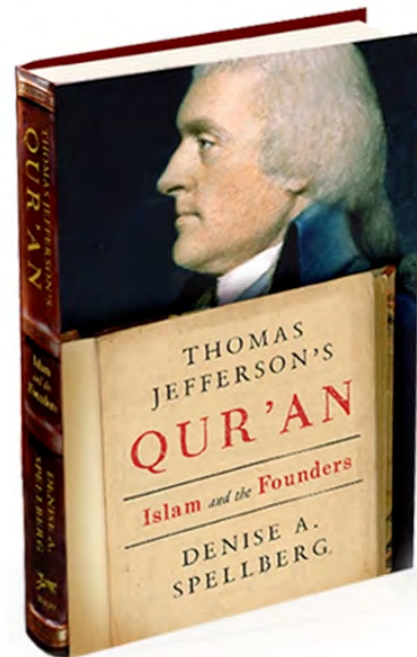
The events of the English Civil Wars were very much in the memories of American Founders: Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, James Madison, John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, and Benjamin Franklin. They were in agreement on the following: no Monarch, no Parliamentary Democracy, and no violent transition of power. They were also in agreement that there would be a written Constitution with a preceding Bill of Rights which would protect the “minority from the tyranny of the majority.” All agreed that the “First Amendment” would state clearly an important Constitutional principle where religion is concerned. In the first place, Congress would recognize no established Church/Religion. Secondly, Congress may not restrict the religious freedom of any person or group. It is not that the American Founders disbelieved in God. They did! The American Founders were Philosophical Deists which was, in effect, Islam without

the Qur’an. In fact, Thomas Jefferson had a love and respect for Islam and believed that the New Republic could benefit from Islam. In many ways, Thomas Jefferson anticipated the “Letter from Mecca” written by American-born Muslim, Malcolm X. In his letter, Malcolm X suggests that “America needs to understand Islam” (5).

In 2013, University of Texas Professor, Dr. Denise Spellman, wrote a provocative book entitled “Jefferson’s Qur’an: Islam and the Founders” (6). She points out that in 1753, the younger attorney Thomas Jefferson ordered from London “The Qur’an in Two Volumes” by George Sale. The young Jefferson, Spellman argues, may very well have learned about “Religious Freedom” from the Qur’an in Chapter 2, Verse 257:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ

“Let there be no compulsion in matters of religion.”



Many Jefferson scholars believe that this verse is the inspiration of “religious freedom” (not to be confused with “religious tolerance” espoused by John Locke) which influenced Governor Thomas Jefferson of Virginia to pen “The Statute for Religious Freedom in Virginia” (7). This important Statute is enshrined in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

When Jefferson was serving in France, he was friendly with three Ottoman Muslim diplomats. Jefferson was aware that the Ottoman State was governed by a hereditary Sultan. But he was also familiar with the "Mejelle" (8), an Ottoman Civil Law Code that, among other things, had the "separation of powers" which he believed would both ease and prohibit conflict in the New Republic. This little piece of Ottoman praxis, Jefferson surmised, would potentially ease the transition of powers.

There was a final thing that appealed to Jefferson as far as both smooth transitions and "religious freedom" were concerned. Jefferson knew his history. This is something that many Americans do not know. He knew that from 1299 to 1517, the Ottoman State had more Christian citizens than Muslim citizens. He understood the Ottoman concept of "Millet" (independent court of law in the Ottoman Empire pertaining to 'personal law') which had evolved from "Dhimmi" (a non-Muslim living under protection of Sharia or Islamic Law) in Islamic Jurisprudence. These Islamic concepts guaranteed rights of Citizenship to all citizens. Spellman points out that Jefferson looked forward to the day when Muslims had equal rights of Citizenship in the New American Republic. In this way, smooth transition of power would be safeguarded.

Here we are in February 2021 and the transition was not smooth. Did the Founders fail? Were they wrong? Look at the "religious fervor" found in White Supremacy and in White Evangelical Christianity.

The reality is that the Founders did not fail. The problem is that "We the People" have not been faithful in continuing the task started by them. The Preamble states that "We the People" must continue the process of forming "the more Perfect Union." When they completed their task, there was still much to do. West Africans were still enslaved, women did not vote, women were "property," and native Americans were still exploited.

On January 6, 2021, an angry mob of White Supremacists and so-called Christians stormed the United States Capitol Building. A line is drawn in the sand. What are our problems today? A recent President tried to "ban all Muslims." The People said "No!" The indige-

nous State of Hawaii filed a law suit against that President. Islam is a religion protected by the Constitution in the US.

African Americans are still treated as second class citizens. Muslims, Jews, Christians, white people, Hispanic people, and native Americans are joining the "Black Lives Matter Movement." People are economically disenfranchised and other people are rising up saying, Enough!

Healthcare, food, and shelter are basic human rights! Do you see what I am suggesting? We still have a great deal of work to do. It will take all of us working together. It will not be up to President Joe Biden or Vice President Kamala Harris, or any other President or politician. It will be up to "We the people" that is me, you, and everyone else around us!

Let's get to work, together!

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Coups, Chaos, and Constitutionality: The Transfer of Power By Force

Anser Ahmad

Introduction

The phenomenon of coups dates back to the days of the Roman empire, with great men such as Julius Caesar ascending to power through a coup and subsequently being overthrown by another coup. One of Europe's greatest leaders, Napoleon Bonaparte, seized power in France through a military coup in 1799. More recently, Latin American and African countries have seen innumerable coups, and in some Euro-Asian countries such as the Soviet Union, China, and Pakistan. Coups d'état are by no means rare occurrences. There have been more than 350 successful insurrections or coups worldwide since 1800 (1). Leaders as diverse as Augusto Pinochet, Saddam Hussein, the Shah of Iran, Fidel Castro, and even Adolf Hitler, have risen to power through a coup.

A coup, or a "coup d'état," is a French word meaning "blow of the state." Essentially a coup is the sudden removal and seizure of a ruling government and its powers. Typically, it is an illegal, unconstitutional seizure of power by either a political faction, the military, or a dictator, potential or established. If the perpetrators of a coup can hold on to power for at least seven days, it is often regarded as a successful coup.

A small, well-organized group usually carries out a coup, which may or may not involve violence. Coups do not always lead to greater stability. Some coups may create more chaos among the general populace. Coups are distinguishable from revolutions in that a small group of individuals carries out the former. By contrast, revolutions are carried out by a larger group and may take place over a longer period. While some coups have led to a democratic government, others have resulted in the spread of communism or fascism. As coups affect the governance of a particular country and have long-reaching consequences on other nations, coups are often backed by powers outside of the state. These have sometimes benefited the third country but, on many occasions, have even backfired.

Although there have been hundreds of coups, some of the more unique coups with long-reaching implications are summarized below.

"Et Tu Brutus" – The Ides of March

The most well-known coup d'état, one made famous through literature by Shakespeare, was that of Julius Caesar, the Emperor of Rome. While Caesar was a widely popular ruler, some among his administration plotted to overthrow him due to his oppressive policies. Upon returning to Rome following a military campaign, Caesar was proclaimed as "dictator in perpetuity" (2). However, a few weeks after his return, on a day famously known as the "Ides of March" (March 15), Caesar was stabbed to death by a group of senators led by Marcus Brutus (a close friend of his) and Cassius (3). The conspirators proclaimed themselves as the Roman Republic's liberators, but they soon learned that their deed was not popular amongst the people of Rome, so they ended up fleeing to Greece. This was an example of a non-military lead coup. In this case, it was some of Caesar's closest friends and confidants who betrayed him. This was also a "bloody" coup where the ruling dictator was assassinated (4).

Coup within a Coup – the Crowning of Napoleon Bonaparte

In 1799, France was under the rule of a five-member Directory. When Napoleon, who was a general in the French army at that time, returned from an Egyptian military campaign, he plotted to overthrow the French Directory, which consisted of five Directors. Napoleon conspired with two of the five Directors to overthrow the remaining three Directors. Once the three were forced to resign, the two remaining Directors who had conspired with Napoleon, Gohier, and Moulin refused to resign. Napoleon then staged a coup within a coup by promptly taking Gohier as a prisoner. The other Director, Moulin, managed to escape. Napoleon then handpicked a group of legislators to abolish the Directory and appointed himself to a three-member Consulate. Five years later, Napoleon crowned himself as

supreme Emperor of France. Many historians consider this coup as the effective end of the French revolution and the first French empire's beginning (5).

Hawaii Was Acquired as a Result of a Coup

American marines, wealthy settlers, and businessmen were all instrumental in the dismantling of the century-old Kingdom of Hawaii. In 1893, prominent citizens from the United States (US) mainland declared that 57-year-old Queen Lili'uokalani was somehow a "threat" to their safety. They then petitioned Washington DC to annex Hawaii. United States troops landed and ended her rule, leading to the creation of a republic that, within a few years, formally became a United States territory. Queen Lili'uokalani was later implicated in an 1895 plot to restore the monarchy and was sentenced to five years hard labor, although her punishment was commuted to house arrest (6).

Hitler's Failed Coup D'état Lead to the Rise of the Nazi Party

In November 1923, Adolf Hitler, who was then 34 years old, and several thousand of his supporters, staged what is referred to as the Beer Hall "Putsch" (coup) in Munich, Germany. Since 1921, Hitler had led the Nazi Party, at that time a fledgling political group that promoted German pride, anti-Semitism, and dissatisfaction with Germany's treatment by other nations following World War I. By November 1923, Hitler and his associates had concocted a plot to seize the Bavarian state government's power by kidnapping Bavaria's state commissioner and two other conservative politicians (7).

Approximately two thousand Nazis marched on the city center but were confronted by the police force, which resulted in the deaths of sixteen Nazi Party members and four police officers.

But the plot failed miserably, and Hitler himself was wounded during the clash. Although he escaped immediate arrest, two days later, he was apprehended, charged with treason, and tried. The failed coup brought Hitler to the German nation's attention for the first time and generated front-page headlines in newspapers around the world. His arrest was followed by a 24-day trial, which was widely publicized and gave him a platform to express his nationalist sentiments to

the rest of Germany. Although he was sentenced to five years in prison, he spent less than a year behind bars, during which time he dictated "Mein Kampf," his political autobiography. After prison, he worked to rebuild the Nazi Party and regain power, this time via legal and political methods. This led to the rise of the Third Reich, Nazi Germany, and eventually World War II (8).

The Iranian Coup Which Led to a Revolution

In 1953, the United States, through its Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), orchestrated a coup in Iran for one primary reason: oil. Mohammad Mosaddegh, who was the Prime Minister of Iran, had cut off ties with Britain, not allowing Britain access to Iran's oil industry. Britain then approached the United States, after which the CIA hatched a complicated plan to overthrow the Iranian government by spreading anti-Mosaddegh propaganda. The CIA also convinced the public and the Islamic clergy to side against the government (9). While an initial coup failed, a second coup resulted in Mosaddegh's lifelong house arrest and Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's appointment as the Shah of Iran. However, Pahlavi's monarchy was eventually overthrown twenty-six years later, in 1979, by something much greater than a coup: the Iranian Revolution (or the "Islamic Revolution"). The Shah was replaced by Ayatollah Khomeini, a senior Muslim cleric. In part, the Iranian Revolution was a conservative backlash against the secularizing efforts of the Western-backed Shah, who was perceived by many as a puppet of non-muslim Western countries, specifically the United States and Britain. At the time of the overthrow, most Iranians believed Western ideals had "contaminated their country," leading to the Shah's overthrow. This event launched Islamic fundamentalism as a political force, which continues to affect Muslim countries throughout the world, ranging from Morocco to Malaysia (10).

United States Involvement in Latin American Coups

The United States (US) has intervened hundreds of times in Latin American countries' affairs, including Guatemala, Panama, Nicaragua, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile (7). In Chile, a US-backed coup led to the overthrow of President Allende in favor of General Pinochet. Pinochet, unfortunately, became one of the most

oppressive and brutal military rulers of the 20th century. He not only censored the press and banned unions, but he ordered the torture and killing of hundreds of Chileans, resulting in the death of nearly 28,000 people during his rule (11).

Similarly, in exchange for Cuba's independence, the US placed military leader Fulgencio Batista as its dictator. From 1952 to 1959, under Batista, the Cuban government opened Havana to US investment and tax refuge, exploitative tourism, organized crime syndicates, and drugs, announced that it would match, dollar for dollar, any investment over one million US dollars (12). In 1959, Fidel Castro overthrew the Batista government, causing alarm in the US over his explicit communist agenda and links to the Soviet Union. Castro sent a group of 160 rebels led by the hero of the revolution, Ernesto "Che" Guevara, to attack the Moncado Barracks in Santiago and the Bayamo barracks. The revolution was a violent one involving arms and guerilla warfare. But Castro succeeded, and the Communist Party of Cuba has run the government since 1965 (13).

President Eisenhower did attempt to overthrow Castro but failed. And in 1961, CIA-trained anti-Castro exiles landed in the Bay of Pigs, and supported by US strikes on Cuban airfields, attempted to overthrow Castro's regime. But Castro's communist government was well equipped with Soviet weapons and defeated the invasion, which led to the notorious Cuban Missile Crisis stand-off the following year. This was a time when the world came dangerously close to outright nuclear war (14).

The Military Led Pakistani Coups

Pakistan has seen several coup attempts in its brief history. Six coups have occurred since its independence in 1947. In 1977, when the majority of Pakistan was calling for President Bhutto's overthrow, the military general, Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, carefully orchestrated a coup d'état, as he knew Bhutto had integral intelligence in the Pakistan Armed Forces. The coup, called "Operation Fair Play," transpired on July 5, 1977. Before the announcement of any agreement, Bhutto and his cabinet members were arrested by troops of Military Police under Zia's order. Zia-ul-Haq and his military government would later portray the coup as a "spontaneous response to a difficult situa-

tion." Zia-ul-Haq ruled Pakistan for ten years before his untimely death in 1988 (15).

In 1999 another coup took place in Pakistan when another military leader, Pervez Musharraf, overthrew the Pakistani government. It was a bloodless coup as Musharraf declared a state of emergency and took control of the entire country. As a result, many laws were flouted. The Pakistani Supreme Court stepped in, ordering that military rule could only last for another three years before democracy returned, but Musharraf was adamant it should last longer. A referendum was raised by him, which he won by a ninety-eight percent vote (16). This illustrated that the usurper, in this case, Musharraf, was legitimized by the Pakistani people. However, eventually in 2008, after facing possible impeachment, he resigned and was replaced by the newly elected President Asif Zardari (17).

Was the assault on the US Capitol a "Failed Coup"?

Very recently, on January 6, 2021, hundreds of rioters violently stormed the United States Capitol building while the United States Congress and the Senate were in session at that location. It was carried out by President Trump's mob supporters, who claimed that the 2020 election had been stolen from him. The assault on the Capitol was widely condemned by political leaders and organizations in the United States and internationally, many referring to it as an insurrection. An "insurrection" is characterized as the act of revolting against civil authority or an established government. Senator Mitt Romney, a Republican of Utah, stated, "What happened here today was an insurrection, incited by the United States President." Insurrection, or rebellion, is a crime under the United States Code and is punishable by a fine, a maximum sentence of ten years in prison, or both (18). Others, including newly elected President Biden, suggested that the Capitol building riots "bordered on sedition." Sedition is the "incitement of resistance to or insurrection against lawful authority" (19). Still others, such as New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, wrote: "We must call today's violence what it actually is: a failed attempt at a coup." Retired Army Lt. Colonel Alexander Vindman, a key witness in the second impeachment hearings against President Trump, concurred and told CNN that he thought the events at the Capitol could be categorized as a "failed coup" (20). While it is unclear whether the US Capitol riots

reached the level of a failed coup, it is clear that the rioters' attack on the US Capitol was unlawful and led to violence, death, and property destruction. It is safe to say, however, that there were some planning and organization. Whether the US Capitol rioters' ultimate purpose was to overturn an election, prevent the electoral votes from being certified, or overthrow the government, will continue to be debated.

Conclusion: Are Coups Constitutional?

Constitutions and constitutionality typically embody the practices, customs, and rules through which power is established, ensuring that no one is above the law. Constitutionality is a technique of reconciling state authority with individual and group liberties. Constitutions organize the transmission and exercise of power in the state. They also serve as the basis of the legitimacy of the wielders of political authority. The Constitutions also determine how its members are to function and how they may express their dissent. Therefore, seizing power through a coup is logically against constitutional norms and is regarded as unconstitutional and illegal by its very nature (21).

At the same time, incumbent governments that fail to

govern by the prescripts of their national constitutions, including those that alter or attempt to alter constitutions without following the right constitutional procedures, are also acting unconstitutionally. Therefore, when a coup occurs, the usurper's single most important goal is to establish legitimacy. Legitimacy consists of four elements: legal (was it within the rules of the Constitution?), problem-solving (was it needed?), justifiable (does the usurper have a right to command?), and compliance (will the countrymen accept the new governance?). If the usurpers can satisfy these four criteria, their power tends to last for some time (22).

It is difficult to conclude whether all coups prove beneficial or detrimental to their respective nations. However, it can be concluded that if a coup brings about stability in the government and improves the lives of its people, it holds some value and may be closer to the ideals upheld in a country's Constitution than those espoused by a previous, more inadequate government. However, as has been shown, coups may often backfire, leading to much more dangerous events, including world wars and religious revolutions.

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poetry CORNER

Spreading of Faith by the sword is forbidden

Translated by Waheed Ahmad. Translation revised by A. Bushra Salam Bajwa for this publication.

*Discard the thought, O friends, of striving with the sword,
War and killing for the sake of religion are now forbidden*

*The Messiah who is the leader in religion has come now,
It is now the end of all fighting for religion.*

*Now the light of God descends from the heavens,
The religious decree for fighting is now redundant*

*He who even now fights with the sword is an enemy of God;
He is a denier of the Prophet if he holds such a belief.*

*Why do you abandon the Tradition of the Prophet?
Whoever abandons it, you, too, renounce that vile one!*

A poem by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), The Promised Messiah and Mahdi
in Durre-e- Sameen "Isha'ate Deen Bazore Shamsheer Haraam hai."
Appendix to Tohfa-e-Golrvia, P. 26,



NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS



January 16, 2021 Press Releases

The new channel is the only digital terrestrial Islamic channel currently broadcasting 24 hours a day in Ghana

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is pleased to announce that on 15 January 2021, the World Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad launched MTA Ghana – a new digital terrestrial television channel established specifically to meet the needs of the people in Ghana.



His Holiness officially launched the channel from the Mubarak Mosque in Islamabad, Tilford, after announcing its launch during his Friday Sermon.

The launch was followed by a silent prayer led by His Holiness in thanks to God Almighty.

Announcing the launch during the Friday Sermon, His Holiness outlined that the channel will broadcast for twenty-four hours a day and also mentioned the Abdul Wahab Adam Studio in Ghana, which was established in 2017 and has been producing majority of the programmes broadcast on MTA International's, MTA Africa channel.

Speaking about the Studio facilities and workforce, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

"There are 17 full-time staff members serving at the Wahab Adam Studio and more than 60 volunteers and they have been trained through various professional organisations. The Wahab Adam Studio is one of the most advanced studios in Ghana and comes equipped with state of the art facilities. Several media companies and broadcasters send their staff for training and experience in this studio."

Explaining the scope of the new channel, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

"A new TV channel named MTA Ghana is being launched by me shortly. This will be a new national TV channel broadcast on a digital terrestrial platform 24 hours a day. MTA Ghana will broadcast without the need for a satellite dish and will be available on a regular antenna in the country. This means that the people of Ghana will be able to access this TV channel very easily even on a regular antenna. It will be available at the same location and platforms as the other major TV channels in the country. Thus, it will reach hundreds of thousands of homes across the country and it will cover all areas, from the north of the country to its south, God willing."

His Holiness explained that the channel will broadcast content covering various languages spoken in Ghana on religious, educational and moral issues. Highlighting one of the unique aspects of the channel, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

"The channel will be utilised to convey the true and beautiful teachings of Islam to the people, God willing. MTA Ghana is the only channel on a digital platform in the country that is solely dedicated to broadcasting Islamic teachings."

Reflecting on the progress of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

"Where in one location our opponents try to close an avenue, Allah the Almighty opens several new doors for us in other places. These are the blessings of Allah the Almighty upon us. God willing, the paths which are being closed, they too shall open up one day at their appointed time. However, [as avenues close] Allah the Almighty provides the means for us to rejoice too."

MTA Ghana will broadcast all of the programmes of the Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, such as his weekly Friday Sermon and other addresses.

It will also be producing unique content specifically tailored to the people of Ghana.

The channel was officially launched shortly after the Friday Prayer by His Holiness and its launch was followed by a silent prayer.



Former church turned into a mosque and Islamic centre in Chatham

Tahmina Aziz · CBC News · Posted: Feb 22, 2021



Chatham Islamic Centre opened a new building in the former St. James Presbyterian Church this month where local Muslims can gather, pray and learn together.

It became increasingly important for the growing Muslim community in Chatham, Ont. to have a place of their own, says Amir Naveed, the president of Chatham Islamic Centre.

He and other members of the group spent the last several years renting gymnasiums and rooms in schools, which they found challenging, especially since spaces were tight.

"You can fit only maybe five people," he said.

So, in 2019, they started looking for a permanent place to host gatherings.

Naveed said the community has been buzzing with excitement about the new building and the new activities that are planned. Many have donated and expressed their interest in investing and building up the community.

Since moving to Chatham from the Greater Toronto Area in 2010, he said he's seen the local Muslim population grow from dozens to hundreds, adding that it became more pressing to find a space for them.

"We've had a Muslim presence in Chatham for a long time. And they were doing an amazing job working with the interfaith [groups] like [in] soup kitchens and all kinds of interfaith activities," Naveed said, adding that a lack of a Muslim-specific facility posed challenges for young families.

"They were moving because they were not finding any place [in Chatham] ... some of our very close family friends actually moved back to Toronto because [Chatham didn't] have anything for the whole family," he explained.

Naveed says the new building is significant because it enables the community to thrive and pass on its teachings to the younger generation.

"It's not just a building. It is the whole concept because the whole Muslim culture, Muslim society is based on how you should know your neighbour. You should know who is coming for prayer. It's not just like you come pray and then go home. You want them to sit down ... in the mosque and have a chat," he explained.

Rizwan Khan, a longtime Chatham resident and member of the group, said he's proud to be part of the community and thankful for their financial support.

"Thank God for giving us this opportunity. Everybody in the community is excited and especially with desperate times," he said, adding that they couldn't hold an open house due to the pandemic. "We cannot do all the stuff that normally would be used to do when we have a new place. We are trying our best to limit the number of people coming in," he said, adding that the centre is currently only open for prayers and they're following the provincial COVID-19 protocols.

Transition from church to Islamic center

Despite the building being a former church, there

wasn't much to change to cater to the Muslim community, Khan and Naveed say.

They're working with members of the former church to return and replace any items left behind.

"There are some things that we discussed with the previous group about anything they can take from here when the transition [happens] because we respect the sentimental values as well," Khan said.

"Whatever we could hand over, we did hand over to them. Some of the literature and books, we have already shared with them ... and there are some symbols that definitely we can work with the community members and see how we can try to arrange to replace them," he continued.

Khan and Naveed say they look forward to the different activities and initiatives the centre has planned, including parenting services and arranging a women's only gym, as suggested by Naveed's daughters.

"I haven't seen our whole community [this] excited," Naveed said. "Everyone wants to come ... we are very, very excited."



White evangelicals' dominance of the GOP has turned it into the party of resistance

***Analysis by John Harwood, CNN
Sun February 28, 2021***



(CNN) For obvious reasons, President Joe Biden made the coronavirus pandemic his first legislative priority. Polling shows wide public support for his \$1.9 trillion relief plan.

But that didn't translate to Republican support for the measure. When the House passed the bill last week, not a single GOP lawmaker voted yes.

That offered a bookend to developments in state capitals across the nation, where Republicans seek to restrict access to the ballot. After Biden defeated Donald Trump in a presidential election free of large-scale voter fraud, Republican legislators have proposed curbing voting methods used last November in the name of stopping large-scale fraud.

In both cases, Republicans defied broad signals from the political marketplace. Instead, they heeded the defiant partisan impulse that Trump sounded before leaving office: "If you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore."

Those words explain why Trump's pugnacity continues to grip the GOP despite his electoral defeat, second impeachment and mounting legal woes. They reflect the existential dread motivating the conservative White Christians who form the party's core constituency and fear 21st century America is drifting away from them.

"It really is about not giving an inch anymore -- this sense of absolute resistance," says Robert P. Jones, director of the Washington-based Public Religion Research Institute and author of "The End of White Christian America."

The imperative for resistance over cooperation, even when futile, fueled Trump's denial of his defeat and the deadly US Capitol insurrection by his supporters that was replete with Christian iconography. In a different context, it produced the reflex among conservative politicians and commentators to blame Democratic energy policies for the recent power-grid crisis in Republican-controlled Texas -- as stalwart conservative Sen. Ted Cruz, his constitu-

ents suffering, headed to a Mexican beach.

"For the Republican Party, the sensationalization, nationalization, and demonization of the political system matter far more than any form of governing," Amanda Carpenter, a former Cruz aide who is now a CNN contributor, wrote in *The Bulwark*. "Political performance is the point. Both the means and the end. The purpose and the power."

White Christians' hold on the GOP

For almost all of American history, White Christians have represented a large majority of the US population and controlled the levers of government power. But that majority had shrunk to just 54% by 2008 when Barack Obama won election as the first African American president and personified the nation's changing demography.

Trump has personified resistance to that change with his turn-back-the-clock call to "Make America Great Again." Faith in his singular mission proved so strong that at last summer's nominating convention Republicans didn't even offer a governing platform. Resistance hasn't worked. Trump lost his reelection bid, Democrats captured Congress, and the proportion of White Christians in the population has now shrunk to 44%, PRRI research shows.

But White Christians still hold unchallenged dominance within the GOP. They represent two-thirds of rank-and-file Republicans, Jones said. And they represent more than 90% of Republican senators, House members and governors.

The most conservative among them -- those describing themselves as evangelical or born-again -- wield the greatest influence. Last November, that group -- comprising 28% of the overall electorate according to exit polls -- gave Trump three-fourths of their votes. And their grievances against prevailing national sentiment on issues from gay rights to immigration to racial justice to election integrity echo through GOP stances in Washington and state capitals now.

Just three House Republicans joined Democrats last

week in voting for the Equality Act, which would bar discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. "An attack on God's creation," declared Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, the first-term Georgian who has become the symbol of House Republican combativeness.

Just 11 House Republicans voted to discipline Greene over her public embrace of extremism. A January survey by the conservative American Enterprise Institute showed White evangelical Republicans likelier than the rest of the party to believe in the conspiratorial QAnon fantasy, that a "Deep State" within the government targeted Trump, and the falsehood that Antifa rather than Trump supporters staged the January 6 insurrection.

Local party organizations around the country have assailed the 10 House Republicans who voted to impeach Trump over that insurrection. Rep. Adam Kinzinger's own relatives labeled him a "disappointment to God."

Instead of condemning the idea of physical resistance, White evangelical Republicans embrace it, the AEI survey showed. Fully 60% agreed that "the traditional American way of life is disappearing so fast that we may have to use force to save it."

Embracing lies

White evangelical Republicans who accept Trump's election lies also propel the national GOP push to restrict voting procedures. Three-fourths believe Biden did not legitimately win the election, the AEI survey showed; among other Republicans, a 56% majority accept Biden's victory as legitimate. Even on the pandemic that has claimed more than 500,000 American lives, ravaged the economy and upended normal life, Republican lawmakers reflect the emphatic skepticism of White evangelicals. In an AEI survey last fall, 68% of White evangelical Republicans said the media had exaggerated the number of deaths from the pandemic. In a separate PRRI poll, 68% expressed resignation over the toll of coronavirus, calling it "inevitable" rather than the result of failure to control the outbreak.

Biden last week battled GOP resistance to his Covid relief bill and his nomination of Indian-American Neera Tanden as budget director. Soon he will turn to his plans -- already denounced by top Republicans - to provide legal status and eventually citizenship to undocumented immigrants.

Meantime, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell fends off questions about intra-party divisions by underscoring a higher priority: what Republicans agree they're against.

"I think what you need to focus on," McConnell told reporters last week, "is how unified we are today in opposition to what the Biden administration is trying to do."



Covid-19: Are 'hate crimes' against Asian Americans on the rise?



An elderly Thai immigrant dies after being shoved to the ground. A Filipino-American is slashed in the face with a box cutter. A Chinese woman is slapped and then set on fire.

These are just examples of recent violent attacks on Asian Americans, part of a surge in abuse since the start of the pandemic a year ago.

From being spat on and verbally harassed to incidents of physical assault, there have been thousands of reported cases in recent months.

Advocates and activists say these are hate crimes, and often linked to rhetoric that blames Asian people for the spread of Covid-19.

What's happening in the US?

The FBI warned at the start of the Covid outbreak in the US that it expected a surge in hate crimes against those of Asian descent.

Federal hate crime data for 2020 has not yet been released, though hate crimes in 2019 were at their highest level in over a decade.

Late last year, the United Nations issued a report that detailed "an alarming level" of racially motivated violence and other hate incidents against Asian Americans.

It is difficult to determine exact numbers for such crimes and instances of discrimination, as no organizations or governmental agencies have been tracking the issue long-term, and reporting standards can vary region to region.

The advocacy group Stop AAPI Hate said it received more than 2,800 reports of hate incidents directed at Asian Americans nationwide last year. The group set up its online self-reporting tool at the start of the pandemic.

The former gang member fighting anti-Asian racism
'I'm Asian, so I can never be American'

Local law enforcement is taking notice too: the New York City hate crimes task force investigated 27 incidents in 2020, a nine fold increase from the previous year. In Oakland, California, police have added patrols and set up a command post in Chinatown.

In recent weeks, celebrities and influencers have spoken out after several disturbing incidents went viral on social media.

Here are some of the recently reported attacks:

- An 84-year-old Thai immigrant in San Francisco, California, died last month after being violently shoved to the ground during his morning walk.
- In Oakland, California, a 91-year-old senior was shoved to the pavement from behind.
- An 89-year-old Chinese woman was slapped and set on fire by two people in Brooklyn, New York.
- A stranger on the New York subway slashed a 61-year-old Filipino American passenger's face with a box cutter.
- Asian American restaurant employees in New York City told the New York Times they now always go home early for fear of violence and harassment.
- An Asian American butcher shop owner in Sacramento, California found a dead cat - likely intended for her - left in the store's parking lot; police are investigating it as a hate crime.
- An Asian American family celebrating a birthday at a restaurant in Carmel, California, was berated with racist slurs by a Trump-supporting tech executive.
- Several Asian Americans home owners say they've been abused with racial slurs and had rocks thrown at their houses.

What's the situation in California?

Over six million Asian Americans live in California, according to the latest population estimates, by far the most in any US state.

They make up more than 15% of residents in the state. The coronavirus hit the state hard and early, grinding its bustling cities and businesses to a halt. The virus has already claimed over 50,000 Californian lives.

From March to May 2020 alone, over 800 Covid-related hate incidents were reported from 34 counties in the state, according to a report released by the Asian Pacific Policy Planning Council.

Those numbers have since intensified in Orange County, where anti-Asian hate incidents are up by an estimated 1200%, according to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism.

In neighboring Los Angeles County, hate crimes against Asian Americans are up 115%, CBS News reported.



FROM

THE ARCHIVES

Muslim Sunrise, Vol. VI April - July, 1933 Nos. 3 and 4

Islam: The Solution for World Problems

Address by Sufi M.R. Bengalee to The World Fellowship of Faiths, A Second Parliament of Religions,
One of the most Outstanding Events of the Century.

The world is in a state of chaos. Religion has fallen into degeneracy and corruption. There are dozens of religions and thousands of creeds, sects and denominations. There exists great antipathy between the representatives of different faiths and creeds. They are constantly at loggerheads, each claiming to have the only true religion. In such a melancholy state, a seeker after truth often finds himself lost in the quagmire of confusion, as religion seems to be a motley mixture.

There is race and color prejudice. Some people suffer from a superiority complex. There is much talk about democracy, universal brotherhood and equality of men. But these are much abused terms in dynamic speeches and powerful writings. In the realm of reality, it is a tragedy. On account of the color of his skin, a man cannot worship side by side with his brother man, in the temple of God.

Then there is the question of international relations. The tragedies of 1914-18 are still fresh in our memories. The listen to this heavenly call today, shall listen to it tomorrow, and he who will not listen to it tomorrow, shall listen to it the day after, but listen he shall. Blessed are they that bury the hatchet at the first call and extend to their brothers the hand of Peace and Goodwill, for it is they over whose hand will be the hand of God and it is they who will inherit the kingdom of Heaven."

The world has not yet recovered from the aftermath of the great war which caused so much bloodshed. In order to rescue the world from the clutches of the ferocious tiger of war, peace-making machineries of the League of Nations and Disarmament conferences have been established; but alas! they have so far, proved to be complete and tragic failures and the citadel of World-Peace is surrounded by dark forces; the world is in imminent danger of another conflagration. There are the India-England problems, the Sino-Japanese conflict, the situation in Germany and

world-wide communist revolution.

Above all, the unprecedented economic paralysis has shaken the very foundations of civilization. There seems to be no hope for immediate salvation from this world-wide financial collapse. There is a ghastly picture of sorrow and suffering. With thousands of people, it is not only the struggle for existence but it is a matter of life and death. People are starving in the midst of plenty.

In short, the whole world is in a melting pot. If it ever was in need of peace, it direly needs peace now--these tangled difficulties need to be solved.

Islam comes to the scene with a peaceful message to all mankind and claims to bring a satisfactory solution of these baffling problems. Let us make an honest and thorough investigation of the subject. We will first of all discuss how Islam establishes peace between all religions.

Islam on Religious Peace

What strikes us at the outset in the study of Islam is its emphasis on the basic unity of all religions. According to the Islamic conception, from the earliest dawn of history there has been but one religion. All the prophets of God and the founders of the different faiths came to the world for the guidance of men. Whenever the night of spiritual darkness overspread the earth, God sent a messenger with the light of truth for the enlightenment of the hearts of benighted humanity, but fundamentally they all came with the same mission; the Quran says, in no ambiguous terms:

1. There has been no people without a warner (prophet). (Ch. XXXV. 24)
2. And verily we have raised in every nation a messenger (prophet) (proclaiming): Serve one true God and shun false Gods. (Ch. XVI. 36)
3. Each one believeth in Allah (God) and His

Angels and His Scriptures, and His messengers
We do not make any distinction between any
of His Messengers. (Ch. II. 25)

So a Moslem believes not only in Muhammad but in all prophets of all countries and of all ages without making any distinction. Great respect has been paid to Jesus and His mother in the Holy Quran. Nine times has He been called Messiah and His mother, Mary, has been declared as one of the most virtuous women the world has ever produced.

Here is a golden principle for the establishment of religious peace. Had the sophisticated world recognized the truth and wisdom of this noble principle and followed it faithfully, religious peace would at once reign supreme. Let the followers of all religions recognize the fundamental unity of all religions and instead of declaring the followers of faiths other than their own, infidels, let them pay homage to the great religious founders who have been the common benefactors of the whole human race. At once the sun of peace, harmony and good-will will rise on the horizon with the effulgence of golden light.

Monotheism is the central teaching of Islam. All over the world, Moslems are known as unitarians. Resignation unto the will of the One and the Only God is the essence, the sum-total and the length and the breadth of Islam.

A careful investigation of works on comparative Religion makes the startling revelation that Monotheism has been the cornerstone of all religions. Of course, there do exist Deification of men, Trinity, Fourinity, polytheism of, every description but yet, behind the thick and dark clouds of these human corruptions, the sun of Eternal, Imperishable golden Truth of the One God shines forth in full splendor.

Thirteen centuries and a half ago, Islam laid the solid foundations of religious peace, by extending universal invitations to the followers of all religions, to make common cause based upon the belief in One God. Says the Holy Quran:

"Say, O Ye people of the scripture, come to an agreement between us and you that we shall, worship none but Allah (God) and we shall ascribe no partner unto Him and none of us shall take others for Lords beside Allah (God); and if they turn away, then say, bear witness that we have submitted ourselves unto Him." (Ch. III. 64)

In order to bring about peace between all religions Hazrat Ahmad, the Holy, founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, made the following suggestions:

- 1) The founders and leaders of different religions

should not be referred to in a manner calculated to offend the susceptibilities of their followers.

- 2) In the propagation of their faiths, the missionaries of each religion should confine themselves to the expounding of the beauties and excellences of their own religions because to find fault with other religions does by no means prove the truth or superiority of one's own faith.

This will lead to a wonderful discovery and that is, that the common points of all religions will be emphasized and brought into prominence, resulting in tolerance and better understanding. If these noble Islamic principles were adhered to, a new heaven and a new earth would be created a new heaven and a new earth where the conflicting religious groups could successfully be woven into a harmonious unity for concerted action.

Islam on Universal Brotherhood

The dramatic story as to how Islam exterminated color and race prejudice and established universal brotherhood in the world reads like a thrilling romance. In the seventh century of the Christian era, when Islam came to Arabia, color distinction and race prejudice loomed large in that country and slavery formed the basis of the whole social fabric. At such times Islam came and enunciated that all men were born of Adam and Adam was created of clay. The Quran says: "Verily the most pious among you is the most respectable among you in the sight of God." (Ch. XLIX. 13) In other words the color of the skin or belonging to a particular race is not the criterion of respectability . . . The only test of respectability is righteousness, integrity and ability.

All religions exalted universal brotherhood and propounded the principles of democracy. Islam does not possess virtual monopoly in the enunciation of these precepts. The distinction and superiority of Islam lies in the miracles it performed in the fulfillment of these principles in the actual life and action of human society. Within a short period of twenty-three years, a momentous change was wrought in the history of the world. Slaves became the ministers of religion, commanders-in-chief in the battlefields, and governors of provinces, and rose to positions of dignity and leadership in every field of human activity. Islam took slaves and actually raised them to royalty. History presents no parallel. All over the vast Moslem world, from Siberia to South Africa, and China to Egypt, the king and the subject, the high and the low, the white and the colored, the occidental and the oriental gather together in the mosque, five times a day, and stand side by side and shoulder to shoulder, forming one line and thus demonstrate the power of Islam in establish-

ing universal brotherhood. Islam is the most dynamic democratic force in the world.

Here is another mighty contribution of Islam in the solution of the so-called unsolvable problems. Had the world adopted these golden principles, how soon would one family of the whole human race be formed and a new era of world-peace be inaugurated.

Islam on International Relations

International tension is becoming more and more acute every day. World peace is seriously threatened. It is the constant concern of all men of good will to see mankind secure from another world catastrophe. There is a universal hunger for peace. It is therefore quite apropos to discuss at this time, Islam's contribution towards the solution of this vexed problem of international relations.

One of the primary causes of international friction is the deeply rooted covetousness of one nation towards the material values possessed by another. It lies in the indomitable thirst for greed and self-aggrandizement. In this connection,

Islam lays down a principle which strikes at the roots of such causes of international ruptures. The Holy Quran says:

"Lift not thine eyes towards those worldly benefits which we have bestowed upon other nations in order to try them in their actions. That which your Lord has bestowed upon you is best for you and more enduring." (Ch. XXI. 29)

In this verse God says that every nation must devote all its energies to the development of its own talents and take full advantage of all the natural gifts which God has bestowed upon it. The plundering of other nations can by no means be of any permanent benefit and leads to ultimate distress and trouble.

International dislikes and jealousies constitute another important cause of international disputes. Very often one nation wrongs another and a peace is patched up for the time being but the aggrieved nation continues to nurture a secret grudge against the aggressor and eagerly awaits for a suitable opportunity to inflict injury upon it. This generally results in war.

Islam strongly forbids this and enjoins truth and straightforwardness in all international affairs. The Holy Quran says: "O believers, act uprightly, in all matters for the sake of God and deal equitably with people; let not hatred of a people incite you to injustice. Act justly for that is in accord with righteousness. Make God your shield. He is aware of what

you do." (Ch. V. 8)

If the statesmen of the different countries were to set such a high standard of truthfulness and moral integrity in their diplomatic dealings, a large number of international disputes would be easily avoided.

Islam lays great emphasis upon the sanctity of treaties and teaches that treaties should be respected not only between the immediate parties involved, but also by their respective allies. If treachery is apprehended from any state with which a treaty has been concluded, it should not be attacked suddenly, nor should any undue advantage be taken of it. At first a warning must be served to the effect that, as it has been guilty of the breach of faith, the treaty comes to an end. -If the guilty party still persists in its treachery, then, and only then, may war be declared as a last resort.

Islam emphasizes the importance of preparedness for war as a means of the maintenance of peace. So long as diverse governments exist in the world there will always be apprehension of war. Unless you are fully prepared for self-defense, a perfidious enemy may, taking advantage of your weakness and unpreparedness, be tempted to attack you. So, Islam does not allow a Moslem State to offer temptation to other nations to make war upon it, relying upon its neglected defenses. A Moslem nation must therefore ever be fully prepared for self-defense.

Now we enter into the most important phase of the theme—namely Islam's solution of the problem engendered by international hostilities. For the amicable settlement of international disputes, Islam contemplated a combination of nations which may actually be termed a League of Nations.

This is enjoined upon the Moslems and strongly recommended to the non-Moslem. This Islamic League of Nations would be more comprehensive and more far-reaching in its results than the present League of Nations, as it would be invested with far greater powers. The following verse in the Holy Quran furnishes us with the principles of the contemplated League:

"If two Moslem nations enter into hostilities, other Moslem nations should try to make peace between them, but if one of them nevertheless attacks the other, then all of them must fight the former until it submits to the command of Allah (God); and when it so submits, make peace between them and act with justice and equity, for God loves the just." According to this verse, as soon as there are indications of disagreement between two nations, the other nations, instead of taking sides with one or with the other, should at

once demand that the disputants submit their differences to the arbitration of other nations. If the contending parties agree, then the dispute will be amicably settled. If, on the other hand, one of them refuses to submit to arbitration, or having made this submission, refuses to accept the decision, the other nations must unite for the purpose of compelling the recalcitrant nations to submit to the decision of the League. It is obvious that however strong a nation may be it cannot withstand the united forces of all or many nations and will be forced to speedy submission. The arbitrators should on no account play the role of parties to the dispute and should not put forward any claims arising out of the conflicts with the refractory states, for, that would lay the foundation of fresh dissensions. Scrupulous care must be taken that perfect justice be exercised in the settlement of the terms of peace between the belligerent nations. The arbitrators must not be influenced by the fact that one of the parties had defied their authority.

If a League of Nations were established upon these lines, international peace would be secured at once. It is a sad commentary on the conduct of modern nations that when there is a conflict between two states, the other nations either play the part of amused spectators or take sides in the dispute. Such conduct, instead of promoting peace; aggravates the situation. That is why the present League of Nations falls far short of its ideals.

It has often been observed that international friction has been caused by the fact that the Victorious nations take undue advantage of the vanquished ones. The victors dictate their own terms to the vanquished and impose onerous conditions of peace which are out of proportion to the original causes of dispute between the belligerent nations and which are nothing short of penalty instead of justice. Another source of international tension, should be recognized in the fact that whereas individual conduct is judged the rules of moral integrity. These rules are generally ignored in connection with the national conduct. The structure; of international relations cannot be based upon a solid foundation until such conduct is made to conform to the strict rules of moral integrity.

The lack of satisfactory adjustments of the relations between the different governments and their subjects often leads to international discord. According to Islam, the subjects of a country must show implicit loyalty to their governments. They should either lend their whole-hearted support and cooperation to the government of that country or withdraw so as not to disturb its peace and order.

The adoption of the Islamic principle would greatly diminish international friction. The nations would seriously count the

cost of their aggressive adventures. The knowledge that the subjects of the states attacked would be willing to make all sacrifices and offer a united front in defense of their country, would undoubtedly deter aggressive states from waging war upon other nations.

National prejudice plays a conspicuous part in bringing about international collisions. Often the subjects of a nation sympathize with the aggressive policy of its government simply because it is their own government, without any thoughtful consideration of the merit of the question.

This prompts a government to take its steps lightly in translating into action its aggressive projects, confident that regardless of whether the policy is right or wrong, it will have the support of one's government in its policies of injustice and aggression. True patriotism does not consist in encouraging government in its wrong course of action but true patriotism consists in saving the government from the pursuance of such conduct. The Holy Prophet Muhammad says, "Help your brother, be he oppressor or oppressed. Help the oppressor by preventing him from committing the acts of oppression and the oppressed by rescuing him from oppression." Hence, it becomes the sacred duty of the people of a country not to sympathize with the unjust and aggressive policies of its government, but to prevent it wholeheartedly from following an unjust course. True patriotism must compel the people to save the country from actions which would bring it the stigma of oppression. On the other hand, they must be prompted by the true love of humanity in trying to enforce the observance of the principle, "Live and let live."

An overwhelming feeling of national superiority often embitters international relations. The prosperous nations, drunk with power, glory and achievements, despise the backward nations. No nation has been able to realize a uniform record of prosperity and no nation is yet big enough to predict its future security from the ravages of time. The volcanic forces that raise a to the summit of power and glory or bring it down to the lowest depths of degradation are still at work. Nature pursues its course today as actively as it has done through eons of times past. International hostilities cannot be ended until this feeling of superiority is totally eradicated. The Holy Quran says:

"Let not one nation despise another; haply the one which is despised may turn out better than the one which despises." (Ch. XXX. LL)

Again:

"We cause periods of adversity and prosperity to revolve between different peoples." (Ch. III. 13)

Hence, international peace can be secured only when all the nations of the earth come to the full realization of the fact that all mankind forms one nation, and that all nations must be united in things essential for common weal and mutual progress.

Islam on Economic Justice

No one can over-emphasize the gravity of the present economic situation. The nations of the earth are blindly groping in the labyrinths of conflicting economic interests. There is not even the faintest hope for recovery from this universal calamity. Things are drifting rapidly from bad to worse. The atmosphere is extremely dark and gloomy. Space forbids me to do full justice to this vast and complex theme. I am constrained to confine myself only to a brief outline of Islam's solution of the complicated economic problems.

It must be borne in mind in this connection that the lack of wealth is not the cause of this economic upheaval. On the contrary, there is an abundance of wealth but no equitable distribution of this super-abundance. Wealth is concentrated in a few centers. So, the cause of this crisis should be sought in economic injustice. The crisis lies within the system which is doomed to failure, on account of its inherent weakness. It is idle to hope for any enduring salvation from this chaos without replacing this capitalistic system by one which is founded upon the solid rock of justice and fair play and is for the common good of humankind.

It is of vital importance to note at this point that, Islam does not advocate the eradication of private ownership as the cure for economic ills. On the contrary, Islam strongly defends it in a way which does not conflict with the interests of the general public. Private ownership fosters competition which is indispensable for progress, so long as this competition can be kept within reasonable bounds and is not detrimental to social well-being.

Islam removes the evils of capitalism and gives the most equitable distribution of wealth which brings salvation from economic troubles. The Holy Quran says:

"Give to the poor out of the wealth which God has given you (Ch. LI. 19)

"In the wealth of the rich, the poor have a right." (Ch. XXX. 38)

These verses lay the foundation of economic structure. The solution of economic problems is to be sought in the following three Islamic principles.

1. The law of inheritance.

According to the law of Islam, no man can bequeath the whole of his property to one person, Under Islamic law of inheritance, a man's property must be distributed among his parents, all his children, male or female, widow, brothers and sisters-in-fact—among all the distant relatives. This law of inheritance brings about three important results:

First: It does not allow the accumulation of the wealth of a certain individual in the hands of some of his children or relatives. This makes it impossible for the widow or for one or two favored children to monopolize, all their lives, the whole wealth of their father or husband.

Second: Every one of the children and other relatives has his or her share of the capital to start life afresh. None is left to become a beggar in the street.

The third is that the property of each and every Moslem however rich he may be, goes on being distributed and redistributed, and within two or three generations the largest estate will be parceled out into small holdings.

2. The second is the institution of Zakat.

From every hundred dollars that a man possesses beyond his actual needs, two and one-half per cent (2%) must be levied to be devoted to the relief of the poor. You can imagine if two and one-half per cent be collected from every well-to-do man front his surplus money, to what an enormous extent the sufferings of the poor would be alleviated. It is about this Zakat, Joseph Hell, a German oriental scholar, says: "Besides the common prayer, the conception of the social equality was an innovation peculiar to Islam. Help and maintenance of the poor became a sacred trust. It was left no longer to individuals to give what they pleased but the poor tax or Zakat became a compulsory duty and was collected in a central treasury and administered therefrom." If the system of Zakat, as explained above, was to be adopted to relieve unemployment, how quickly and beautifully this baffling problem would be solved.

3. Interest.

The giving and taking of interest is strictly prohibited in Islam for the obvious reason that the possibility of raising loans on interest stimulates people with established credit to enhance their borrowing to an enormous extent. If on the other hand, such borrowing were not allowed, it would be utterly impossible for them to go into such unlimited lengths of borrowing. They would be compelled to admit other people into partnership with them or to restrict the scope of their business, that other people might be able to start similar undertakings. Without interest, the huge trusts and syndicates which monopolize national wealth, would not be possible and wealth would be more evenly distributed among the people. The unlimited accumulation of wealth which is the concomitant result of the present credit

system of commerce is suicidal to moral advancement and spells the ruin of the middle and lower classes.

Under the present capitalistic system, commerce has been based upon credit and has been necessarily associated with interest. That is why an objection is often raised to Islam's prohibition of interest that no commerce would be conducted without it. As a matter of fact, there exists no natural relation between them. Commerce is not necessarily dependent upon interest. Only a few centuries ago, in their palmy days, the Moslems had in their hands, a large share of the world's commerce and yet, they successfully carried it on without interest. They used to borrow money even from the poor classes on the basis of partnership loans and the commerce conducted by them directly contributed to the welfare of the poor people. It follows, therefore, that interest is not essential, though it appears that commerce would come to a standstill without it. No doubt it would be very difficult in the beginning to bring about the change, but the present system of commerce depending on interest can gradually be relinquished as this system has been gradually adopted. Then the western world would not be confronted with the unrest which has become the constant menace to their peace.

Interest is a leech which is sucking away the blood of humanity especially of the middle and lower classes. Even the upper classes are not entirely secure from its baneful effects, though all of them seem to derive a false enjoyment

from it, like the leopard who ate away his own tongue by rubbing it against a piece of stone, foolishly thinking it to be the blood and flesh of another animal. Those who are ready to forego the use of it are too weak to withstand the force of the current system.

In short, Islam removes the evils of capitalism by its laws of inheritance, by the institution of Zakat, and by prohibiting the giving and taking of interest. Islam protects the poor from the clutches of the Shylocks and creates a middle class which is the backbone of society.

In conclusion I offer a prayer to God.

"O, Allah (God), Lord of the Universe, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Master of the day of judgment. Thou are Peace, all Peace emanates from Thee! There is no Peace save in Thee. The path which leads to Thee is called Islam-Peace. Thy kingdom has been described in The Holy Book as a place where the inmates will greet one another by the joyous greeting, Peace, Peace, Peace!"

"O Lord, let Peace reign throughout the world. Let the nations of the earth cease to fight with one another and live in peace, unity, harmony and brotherhood. Let all nations and races, without any discrimination of caste, creed, color or country form one brotherhood. Let Thy Kingdom of Peace, unity, brotherhood and good-will come to the earth for ever and ever."



Questions & Answers

How to achieve peace in the world

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh) writes: "According to the Holy Qur'an, what the world needs is an institution which sets itself the task of establishing justice. Without absolute justice, no peace is conceivable. One can wage wars in protestation in the name of peace, stifle conscience, and still dissent for the purported aim of establishing peace, but all that one can achieve is death but not peace."

Reference:

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, "Islam's Response to Contemporary Issues,"
London, Islam International Publications Ltd., 1992, p.205.



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COVID-19

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

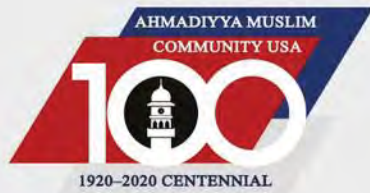
• **HANDWASH FREQUENTLY**

• **STAY HOME WHEN FEELING UNWELL**

• **SEE A DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY**

No.	WHAT? HOW?	DO NOW!
1.	Feeling unwell? <i>Cough, Fever, runny nose, Difficulty in Breathing?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home – See a doctor Please do NOT go to the Mosque or any public places or public events. Cover mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing by using a tissue or sneezing into the sleeve. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.
2.	Have you travelled outside USA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay at home if you begin to feel unwell, even with mild symptoms such as headache or runny nose until you recover. For the next 14 days, monitor your health for fever, cough and difficulty breathing; and see a doctor if needed.
3.	What are the Symptoms of Coronavirus disease?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever Cough / Sneeze Difficulty in breathing Sore throat, runny nose, muscle aches
4.	What treatment is available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently, there is no specific treatment for Coronavirus. Medical care is supportive and aims to help relieve symptoms and prevent complications. You must get medical help if you have any of the above symptoms or feeling unwell.
5.	How can I protect myself against Coronavirus? WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER FOR ATLEAST 30 SECONDS. IF SOAP AND WATER ARE NOT AVAILABLE, THEN USE ALCOHOL BASED HANDSANITIZERS. AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE, NOSE & EYES.	Maintain high levels of personal hygiene, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handwash frequently - Wash hands before and after food preparation, before eating, after using the washroom, after touching the nose or mouth, after coughing or sneezing, after changing diapers and whenever else hands are dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, nose or face. Avoid touching doorknobs, handrails, faucets and surfaces in public area Maintain Social Distance - Stay at least 1 meter (3 feet) away from people who are coughing or sneezing. Avoid handshakes during current situation Frequently clean surfaces and materials around you such as phones, keyboard, mouse, TV remotes, pens, stationary tools etc.

It is only “us” who can beat the virus!



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